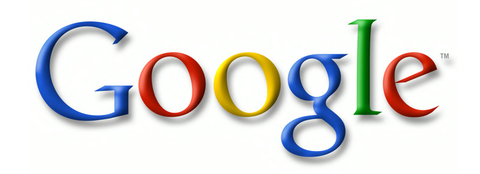


THE RIVIERA

PEN & PENCIL SKETCHES

FROM

CANNES

TO

GENOA



BY

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY



H. A. del.

AT ALBENGA

THE RIVIERA:

PEN AND PENCIL SKETCHES FROM CANNES TO GENOA.

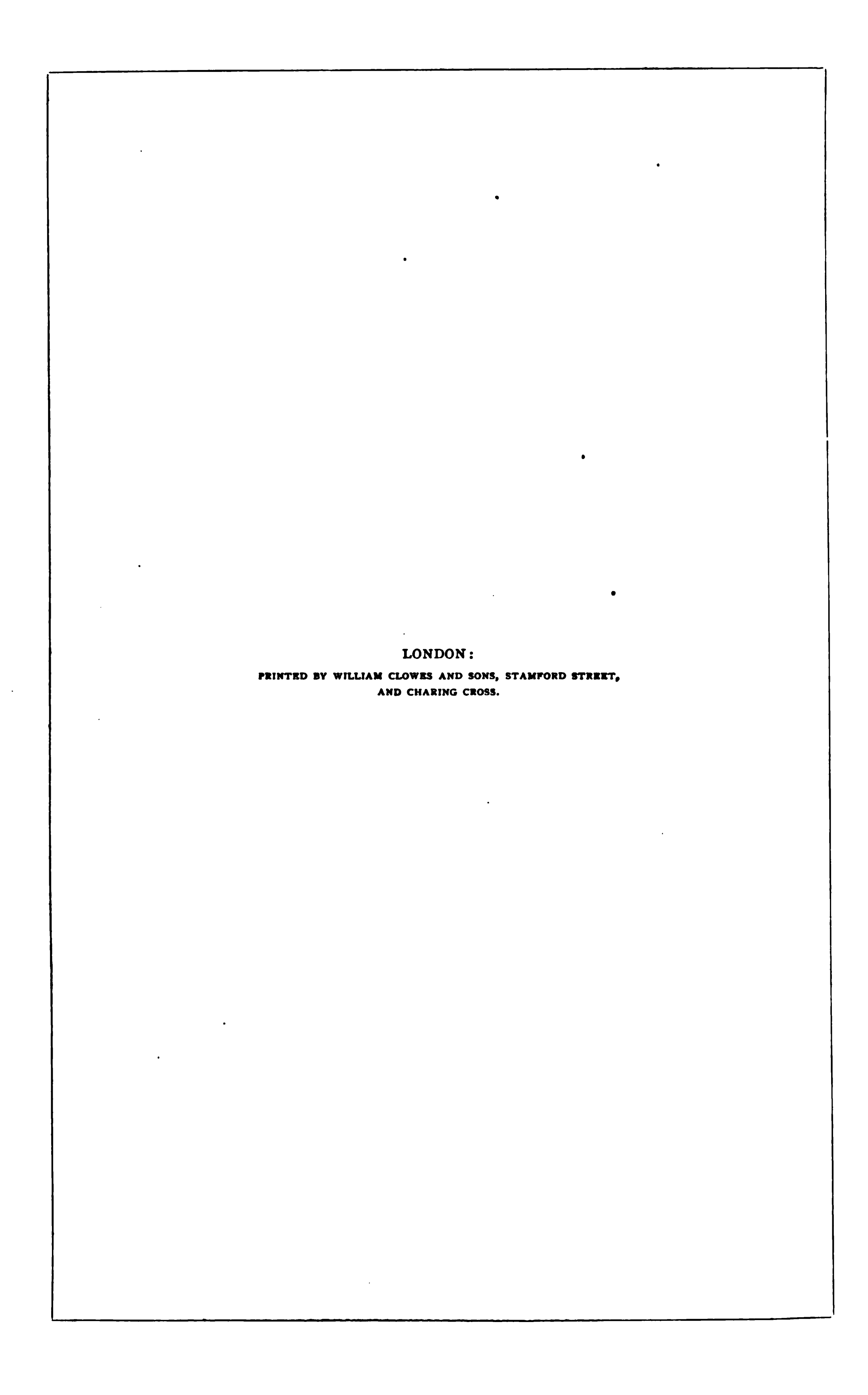
BY

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

With Twelve Chromo-Lithographic Illustrations and Numerous Woodcuts from Drawings by the Author.



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PREFACE.

THE rapid course of events since the following pages were written has put some remarks in them out of date. Who would have imagined, as late as Midsummer of this year, that the route to Marseilles and Nice, through Paris, would before Michaelmas have become a thing of the past? Who could have expected that the misrule of ages on the banks of the Tiber would have come to an end, with its Imperial upholder,—melted away as with a breath, unregretted and almost unenquired for?

But Nature remains unchanged, and it is mainly Nature with which I am concerned.

The fair coast which is the subject of these sketches is as yet untouched by war; but it likewise has its aspirations, for which it would even pay the price of conflict. Only by an Imperial juggle have Nice and Mentone become vassals of France. The whole face of the land, the whole breath of the climate, the whole spirit of the people, are Italian; and by any French government which sets about redressing the wrongs of the Empire, to Italy they must be restored.

But it is impossible to frame such a saying without a careful thought for Italy herself. Whatever of truth there was in the allegation that she could not march to her best welfare while shorn of her proper capital, such an apology can no more be accepted. The friends of liberty and order will cease to believe in, or to tolerate her, if she do not now set her face firmly forward to rid herself of the plague of brigandage, and to develop free and just institutions. The formula of her best sons, the ***libera chiesa in libero stato***, is once more within her reach; let her not suffer it idly to float by, but this time firmly grasp it, and ever hold it fast. She has got rid of the fallacy of a French-protected Priest-King; let her beware of adopting the worse fallacy of good laws disobeyed, wholesome institutions simulated, freedom kissed and betrayed.

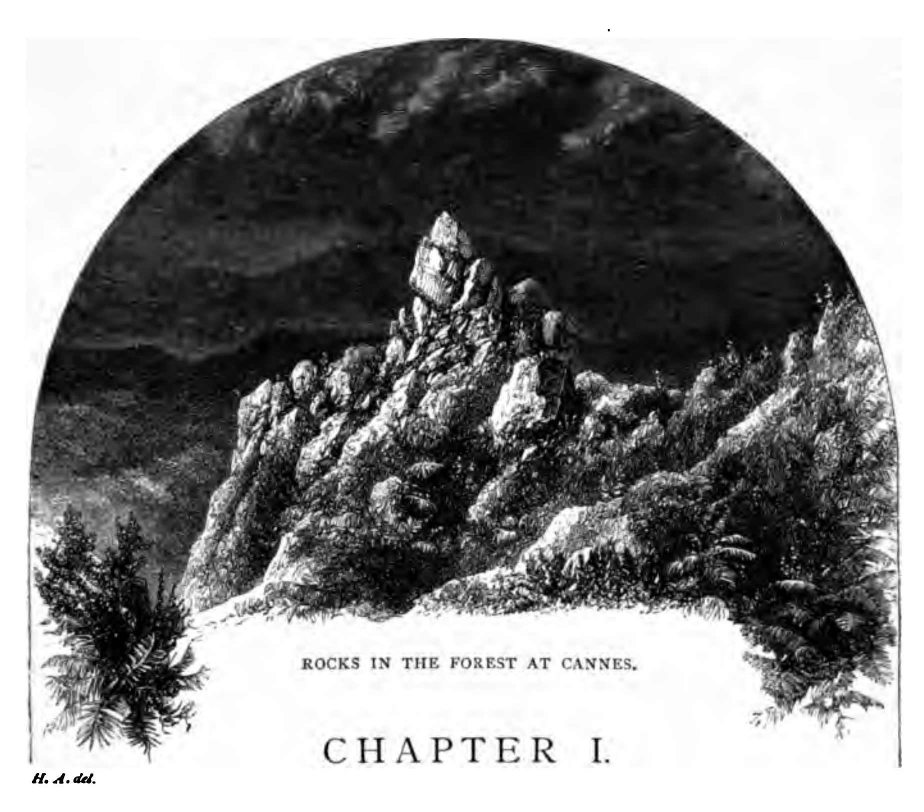
VINE'S GATE, BRASTED,
September, 1870.

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ROCKS IN THE FOREST AT CANNES.

H. A. del.

CHAPTER I.

The Way Out.

SIX weeks alone with Nature is a break in work which does not often happen to a busy person.

My winter's labour (1868-9) had been harder than usual, and had culminated in devising and superintending the arrangements for the enthronement of our new Archbishop. This over, I took the first available day, Monday, February 15th, for my run to the South.

Happily, the morning was calm: the first favourable passage, the captain told me, for some weeks. For no January in my recollection had ever witnessed such a series of storms.

And so we sped: arriving in Paris to the moment, as is the wont of the Chemin de Fer du Nord. Then came the curious hurried glimpse of Boulevard life in the half-hour's passage to the Gare de Lyon, and the somewhat elaborate self-adjustment in a happily-vacant *coupé* for the onward journey.

The next appreciable event was the detention for two hours in the early morning, a little short of Villefranche, owing to a goods train being

deraillé in front of us: as is the habit, according to my experience, of the great P. L. M.—the Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean line.

That tiresome delay was a curious introduction to my interview with Nature. On looking out of the windows of the carriage, a strange sight greeted me. Ahead were the triple red lights of three trains: one flaring close in front of us, another in the middle distance, the third barely visible, as three tiny specks far off. Behind were three more, showing their white front lights at about the same intervals. Eastward, to the left of our route, the flush—the *avant-coureur* of the sun—kindling from purest white to pale lemon, from that to cadmium, from that to chrome; and I bethought me that just under that glow must be the little church and presbytery of Ars; for we were at the St. Georges' Station, a few miles short of Villefranche. Nor were the sounds less curious. In the foreground, so to speak, of the ear's picture, various and repeated whistlings of the trains ahead, as they conducted their, to us, mysterious ministries; in the middle distance, the infinite crowings of fathers of English eggs, in all degrees of strength, and all notes on the alto clef; and lastly, on the very frontier of hearing, the church and convent-bells of the valley of the Saône, mellowed by its glassy surface, and coming softened over the white rime just discernible on the meadows.

Across this double tableau of light and sound would come at intervals the tinkling horse-bells and the little star-like lamps of some early diligence; and, above all, the keen stars—first burning in full splendour, then paling before the advent of the Eastern Conqueror, till the great diamonds of Orion's belt alone were visible, faint as the rubies of the most distant train.

Though duly annoyed at losing time on so long a journey, I was by no means sorry to have had such an unusual preface as this was to a six weeks' study of Nature.

Had this been all. But now for the grumble.

It is not too much to say that this express train from Paris to Nice, and *vice versâ*, is a wretched imposture, of which any civilised nation ought to be ashamed. It is very little to the credit of French management and French law that such a nuisance should be permitted to exist from year to year. If such a train were run on the worst-managed line in England, public opinion would put a stop to it in a month.

This is simple and sober truth. What would the English public think

of a train so ordered that, while it is the only means of through transit between very distant points, yet, by its carrying only first-class passengers, it compels invalids and delicate ladies to be shut up with brutal, drunken men, offending (to say nothing of other annoyances) their ears with profane and foul language during the whole night and day of the journey? There is absolutely no way of avoiding this but by taking a *coupé*, and there are usually not more than three *coupés* in a train. The journey from Nice or Cannes to Paris is not unfrequently an infliction of misery to which an English lady is nowhere else subject in her whole life. It is well known that the English would willingly submit to an extra first-class payment to avoid this. But the Company pay no heed to the matter, because they trust to the gross extortion of obliging parties of two or three to pay for a whole carriage in order to ensure comfort.

Nor is this all. The pace attained by this "express" train from Paris to Nice is—actual (not tabular) stoppages being averaged—about 22 miles an hour. Once a week at a fair estimate (under the mark, as I was afterwards informed), some "retard" occurs, owing to the bad working of the line. When this is the case, there is no attempt whatever made, at any part of the journey, to remedy the mischief. Our delay of two hours and a half, so far from being made up by an acceleration of the very leisurely speed, and abridging the perpetual *cinq* (or *dix*) *minutes d'arrêt* at the stations, grew onwards at every stoppage, till on leaving Marseilles it became five hours, and on arrival at Cannes it was six hours. The monstrous breach of faith in not forwarding express passengers the moment of their arrival at Marseilles, never seems to strike the French mind at all. They have to wait half the day for a slow train, having paid express fares, and no return is made to them. The corresponding express,—on the line of the same Company, be it observed,—from Marseilles to Nice, is despatched at its time, whether the mail from Paris has arrived or not. It is just such another arrangement as if our boat-trains from Dover to London were sent off punctually every day by time-table, independently of the arrival of the boat.

The result of this stupid mismanagement is, that weary invalids and children, who have left Paris on the faith of reaching Cannes at 5.30 and Nice at 7, having been (say, for charity, unavoidably) detained two hours and a half, are then detained wantonly, without regard to human life, three hours and a half more: and this not once nor twice in the season, but frequently, and on system.

One has only to remind the reader again that this wretched train is the only existing direct communication between the metropolis of this much-vaunting country and the great Southern cities. The so-called "omnibus" trains are hardly faster than English coaches, and by one of them it takes 48 hours to get from Paris to Nice—a little over 13 miles an hour.

Whatever else Frenchmen may have to glory in, they ought to be thoroughly ashamed of this great Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean line. And yet I do believe they are proud of it.

That these remarks are not merely an Englishman's grumble, may be shown by the following extract from a local newspaper ('L'Union de Cannes et Grasse,' Feb. 17, 1869):—

"En presence des retards quotidiens de la ligne de Marseille à Monaco, et du triste matériel que l'on consacre aux voyageurs qui viennent dans nos stations hivernales, on annonce qu'un syndicat de journalistes va être fondé par tous les rédacteurs en chef des journaux du Littoral, depuis Marseille jusqu'à Menton, qui s'engageront à reproduire, chacun dans son journal, les justes réclamations du public."

The only pictorial record of this journey is a little sketch taken *en route*, from my backward *coupé*, of Mont Ventoux, between Orange and Avignon. The Southern colours are beginning to prevail, and the recurrence of the curious dark files of cypresses shows us that we have left the North behind.



H. A. del.

CHAPTER II.

The Estrelles.

IT was midnight before I got into my snug quarters in the comfortable Hôtel Beau Site at Cannes. And now in the morning I repair at once to the wild mass of rock and forest behind the house, and pose myself with camp-stool and colours, for my first picture.

One great advantage of Cannes over other Riviera stations is, that you have actual forest scenery within fifty yards of your hotel. The spot whence my picture was taken is certainly not a quarter of a mile from the back of the Beau Site. To get such a scene at Nice, you have to walk or drive full two miles between high walls; at Mentone, to go quite as far, and to climb till you are worn out with fatigue; at St. Remo, to go somewhere else in a carriage. I had armed myself with luncheon, and sat on through the day working up my sketch. There are few employments which give time so swift a pace. The dews are upon me unawares, my paper becomes limp, and my frame chilled, and I set off towards the hills in search of warmth and variety.

But something must be said of the scene itself. The back windows of the Beau Site look on a rapidly rising hill of rough broken stone. On near examination it proves to be disintegrated granite, glittering with its little plates of mica. The growth on this rocky upland is chiefly stunted fir, with underwood of white heath and cytisus. I shall describe this more particularly in another chapter.

The stony paths take beautiful colours; from pale yellow, through salmon red, to the most fiery crimson.

I must ask the reader to sit with me under the flickering shade of this fir, and accompany me through the chief features of the sketch.

The range of mountains so jagged and varied is that of the Estrelles or the Esterelles, the western boundary of the Riviera di Ponente. This I am fully justified in calling them, in spite of territorial or other objections; for they bound the view westward from Cannes, from Nice, from Bordighera, and from many points still further removed. On passing

them eastwards the true scenery of the Riviera, together with its flora and sylva, begins; and on passing them westwards, the traveller enters a country of a totally different aspect from anything he has seen since leaving Pisa. The outline of the Estrelles is unique, and unmistakeable at any distance. To compare great things with small, they are the Malvern Hills of the South.

As seen from Cannes they are full of interest, in point of colour and effect. Morning is the time when the fullest play of light and shadow is visible among them, and every rocky defile and jagged face of cliff is brought out in strong relief. As the sun wears round southward, bright line after bright line vanishes, and the whole mass puts on a deep purple shadow, still further deepening towards evening. The time of our sketch was about 11 A.M., just a little too late for the best effect. The sun is fast creeping on towards the lowest point of the range, as will be seen by the bright lines on the sea. The old fortress and houses at Napoule, seen to the right of the cork-tree in the middle of the picture, have not yet lost his light, and the rock-markings on the face of the higher hills are still visible. But the extremity of the range, which curves slightly round to the east, was already in shade, and as I coloured there was not a moment to be lost. The day, too, was becoming thickly dappled with bright noontide bars of mist, which I knew would soon issue in a uniform glare, hostile to all effect. So that the distance is the reality of noon, and the foreground its memory; a memory, however, from the reality having been before my eyes all the morning, pretty vividly impressed.

Such was the first, and, by comparison with the weather that followed, the fairest day's employ, of the spring visit in 1869.



H A delt. — Vincent Brooks Day & Son lith.

THE ESTRELLES, FROM BEHIND THE BEAU SITE, CANNES.

p. 6.

CHAPTER III.

Cannes.

WE are said never to know when we are beaten, but this is not true of myself to-day. I at least know that this afternoon view of Cannes gleaming in the bright southern sun, is by these hands perfectly unattainable. But then, what in nature is not? So we will console ourselves by trying it in *words*.

I am off the path, not far south from the well-known Croix de Garde. My foreground consists of the usual granite débris of this forest, glittering in the sun with its fragments of mica. It is sparsely covered with the growths of the south, prominent among which at present is the white heath, in full flower.

Has this lovely plant ever received full praise? In order to be appreciated it must be seen just in its prime, as now. If the flowering be a little past, it gets that dusty-miller sort of appearance which I suspect has gained it discredit with our tourists. But when it is seen in its prime, there is a grace of form, and a charm of colour, which are rare even in the heath tribe. For it is not pure white, but the palest imaginable creamy pink, and the green of its spikes is very bright and pure. But its crowning feature is its lavish abundance of bloom. It is no stinter of its charms. Rising high above my head, and extending its thicket for acres round, it gave me just now, in my search for a familiar group of rocks (see p. 1) a tough scramble, and I brought away as a trophy a magnificent branch clothed with bloom, like a mass of white drapery. There must have been hundreds of millions of the tiny bells within the sweep of my arm. Smaller and less conspicuous is our own heather, bearing, as with us, the past blooms of the preceding season, rich in a glowing brown. About as plentiful is the gray wild lavender, not yet fully furnished with its deep purple spikes. Then the yellow-green glutinous cistus, the thorny rhamnus, and here and there the graceful lentisk, make up the undergrowth. I am much too early for the glory and beauty of the scene. Further on in the spring the ground before me would be one mass of lovely flowers; the white and the rose-

coloured cistus, the profuse yellow of cytisus and broom, the dull rich embroidery of the red-brown orchis, with smaller blooms unseen save in the general effect, would spread over this hill-side a perfect Persian carpet of glowing colour. But at present no minor flower disputes the universal reign of the queen heath.

I have not yet spoken of the trees which rise above the undergrowth. These are of two kinds only—the pine and the cork-tree. Of the former, indeed, there are several varieties. The commonest here is that which clothes more or less the lower slopes of all the arid mountains of the French Riviera—a shabby plebeian specimen of the genus, scantily furnished with spines, and twisted into all kinds of deformities. Moreover, at this time of the year he is liable to be infested with enormous caterpillars' nests, looking like sponges, or small blankets, hung in the fork of the scrubby tree. Now and then, an individual soars above his fellows, and claims a right to become a feature in the landscape; but on the whole, the *pinus maritima* cannot be congratulated on its beauty. Nor is a hill covered with these trees a beautiful thing. One praise may be given them,—they light up well with the westering or the setting sun, and then their trunks take a rich orange, with purple shadows. As it is, the Cannes Forest is somewhat monotonous, with these ugly dwarfs sprawling about in all directions, whichever way one looks; but it is gloriously relieved by the lovely colours of its ground, and the magnificent views which it affords on every side.

But to return to our picture. The eastward slope on which I am sitting is deep in shade, and casts an ever-increasing veil of shadow on the opposite bright bank of a minor ravine, which stretches down towards Cannes and the sea.

Over that opposite bank, about half-way down its slope, is seen the picturesque old town, with its double crown of towers, glittering in the full sunshine, and marked out into those distinct lines of yellow light and purple shadow, well known to all observers of southern buildings or rocks. Beyond is the sea, on which the two islands lie burning like gems under the flush of the sun, and the long line of La Croisette runs out almost to meet them, marking the bay with a level line of orange rocks. The water is of that lovely light blue which it puts on under the declining sun, and is just dropping into calm enough to render from its bosom the glittering walls of the prison on the Île Ste. Marguerite.

As this will be our farewell to Cannes, I may speak of my various vain attempts to reach those islands, my days destined for the transit having invariably turned out wet or stormy. Judging by photographs and pictures, the further island, St. Honorat, well repays a day's sketching. There is a picturesque old castle on the farther beach, backed by venerable pines.

One of these attempts might have been successful had I not been misinformed as to the possibility of obtaining a boat at the end of the long tongue of La Croisette.



CHAPTER IV.

Napoule.

IT was on the 30th of March, 1867, that I set off from the Beau Site at Cannes for a day's sketching in the direction of the Estrelles. The road, passing the glass-works and the beautiful Bocca Wood of pines, runs across the level, with the remarkable serrated range full in sight, until it reaches the very curious insulated hill of St. Cassien. This consists of a large lump of the conglomerate, or pudding-stone, which is so abundant on the Western Riviera. The top and sides have become partly disintegrated and covered with decayed vegetable growths, till now they afford holding ground to numerous magnificent pines and cypresses, under which nestles a picturesque little chapel. Some of the pines spring almost horizontally out of the steep sides, and are perfect marvels of equilibrium; their large and intensely heavy head is supported by a trunk which is nearly horizontal. This stem, and the root, must be of wonderful strength to form a counterpoise to such a weight. St. Cassien is a favourite sketching ground; and I tried, but could not produce anything worth carrying away: so I have done far better—trusted to a capital photograph, which gives a characteristic portion of the hill-side with its majestic pines.*

And so onward to Napoule—to reach which, one has to strike far inland to find a bridge over the Siagne, which here comes down to the sea. Having crossed this bridge, the road turns sharp to the left, and skirts the base of the Estrelles for about another mile, at the end of which appears Napoule. The village is poor enough. The one thing is the view towards Cannes, with a picturesque ruined fort and tower in the foreground, and, behind the city, the range of snowy Alps.

These last I was not destined to see, for all day the thunder had been muttering over them, and the distance revealed only a huge bank of inky clouds. But the whole effect was superb. The sun, now near the west, shone grandly on the old castle, bringing it out into brightest relief of light

* See the pendant to this chapter.

and shadow; the sea—troubled and foaming beneath my feet as I stood on a rock near the railway—became in the offing of a brilliant emerald green, and, long ere the eye reached the other side of the bay, the deepest possible ultra-marine. Beyond it was Cannes, with its white houses and double towers; and rising rapidly over it was the great inky cloud of which I spoke. It was one of Nature's sensational effects, not to be missed, nor to be exaggerated.



H. A. del.

I was obliged to hurry my sketch, fearful every moment of a first great drop planting its splash in the middle of my sky or sea. Once packed up, my fears were transferred from my sketch to myself; but, happily, proved as vain for the one as for the other. I was absent on this tour four weeks from England, and the umbrella rested the whole time in its case. Nor was there one drop of rain till we were passing Vougeot, in Burgundy, on the return journey.

One word before we take final leave of the Estrelles. The railway, running round them and through them, offers many beautiful points of view, only to be appreciated by painful "speering" out of the carriage window. The majority of English travellers, as I have had now many opportunities of observing, take no note of mountain, cliff, or opening

Riviera coast, but are curled up with their wraps, and their Tauchnitz novels;—which is a pity, for the glimpses of all these are really magnificent. Huge red rocks hang over the line, forming those fantastic serrated outlines which one sees from the eastward.

It is also a pity that there is no station between Cannes and Agay, on the other side of the Estrelles. Thus one misses many delightful rambles which might be made among the fastnesses of these hills. The train will stop for a picnic party, by previous arrangement, but not for one or a few.



CHAPTER V.

The Estrelles yet again.

IT was evening, after the forest sketch of Cannes. The bright afternoon sun had gradually become faint in a trackless veil of mist, the sure precursor, all the world over, of change for the worse. Later on, the mist had gathered on its bosom folds of leaden drapery ; and those folds had gradually taken shape, as great swelling banks of cloud.



I wandered down to the beach at the only place, west of the Beau Site, where there is a public path under the railway, emerging on the group of picturesque red fragments, known as the "Bocca rocks."

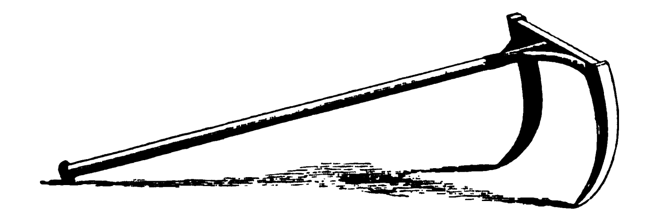
The sun was sinking behind the now gloomy range of the Estrelles. Bridges of fiery vapour joined peak to peak ; and above, a glory of pale lemon yellow was overhung by a dense curtain of flushed purple storm-cloud. The sea, as ever under such a display of heaven's splendours, lay still, in a dead lavender blue, which hardly awoke to colour, even where the shoreward undulations took shadow as they broke on the sand. The masses of rock in deep shade, facing east, yet burned with local colour, by reason of light reflected from the sand. Not a human being, not a bird, not a boat, broke the solitude. Only the old tower of Napoule showed ghastly white against the inky mountains.


H. A. del.

CHAPTER VI.

Auribeau.

TO-DAY I took up an hotel acquaintance from the Beau Site in a little hired carriage, and we went to Auribeau, one of the rock-perched villages of the district. The road winds among the spurs of the low hills constituting the forest of Cannes, and occasionally takes the plain. The views of the Estrelles, seen through the luxuriant olives, are the feature of the first part of the drive. The farmers are digging up their fields of rose-trees with that curious forked hoe which they use throughout Italy. It looks handy enough, and seems to be worked very easily. Of course, it would suit light soils only; but in such soils, I wonder whether we in England might not adopt it with advantage. Here it is :—



It is worked, I need not say, in front of the digger, and the spit of earth is pulled towards him. The rapidity with which a man, whom I watched, turned over the clods was astonishing. The personal fatigue may possibly be greater after the rate; but I doubt whether a day's work with this *bidens* would make the back ache as digging does. Probably, however, all this is an idle speculation; for one learns, the longer one lives, that there has been a providential watching over the habits of various countries, and that the custom of one part, however generally useful it may seem, will not bear transplanting elsewhere.

But here we are in sight of Auribeau, after traversing meadows rich with fragrant narcissus and grand scarlet anemones, and watered by a clear rushing stream. Very picturesque it looks, perched on its hill, partly green, partly dappled with rock, and backed by the solemn dark-blue wavy line of the Estrelles. As usual, when the ascent has been mastered, there is nothing to see in the village. The same narrow alleys, of which all the towns and villages here are composed; the same absence of all sanitary arrangement and care for comfort. But when the point is surmounted, the gorge of the Siagne lies below, a fine specimen of a hill-defile of the Derbyshire or Devonshire order. Our view at the head of this chapter is taken from the south side of the steep, looking down the gorge towards the sea.





CHAPTER VII.

The Chapelle St. Antoine.

AS one looks N.E. from Cannes, up the hills, rich with olive, fig, and orange-trees, dotted with glittering villas, and capped with solemn pines, there is a dip, or col, marked by a solitary cypress. That cypress towers over the Chapelle St. Antoine: and from that spot is one of *the* views.

Having been helped from the Beau Site, which is at the other extremity of the town, by the convenient little omnibus, whose horn, as it passes, is the sound most characteristic of Cannes, I turned up to the left as directed, in order to climb to St. Antoine and sketch the view. But the way, as I also found on another occasion afterwards, is not easy to find; and much time was spent in pursuing various tracks among the olive-gardens, which one after another refused to lead to the ascent.

On a second visit, my companion and I met with a curious adventure. We were passing through a vineyard on a well-marked wheel track, when suddenly a man from the furrows made at us, letting off various jets of angry patois, which we were totally unable to comprehend. Were we

trespassing? No; it was not that: we understood plainly that he confessed to there being a road. But he got angrier and angrier; and as he was armed with a "bidens," and we were unarmed, the situation began to be just a little delicate. At last he was joined by a woman, whose talk was not quite so furious, and not quite so provincial. And now we first learned, that our offence was, not having saluted the "padron." "Well, my friend," said I, with full payment of the missing courtesy, "if you will carry 'le padron' on your hat, we will behave better next time; but who on earth is to know you, if you don't?" This amused the woman, but still further infuriated the lord of the land; and we made onward, with the sound of his scolding, and her laughing, long wafted after us.

At last we regain the steep paved ascent, and soon after reach the summit. To the left is the little chapel, glittering in the afternoon sun; opposite, a slender stone pillar with a holy-water stoup, and terminated by an iron cross; and in front, the glorious view over an "olive-sandalled" upland, backed by the glowing range of the Var mountains, and terminated by the snowy giants of the Maritime Alps.

Immediately beneath lies, basking in light, the village of Valauris, well known at Cannes as the place of manufacture of the very pretty pottery with which the shops and markets abound. In the distance, to the right, is seen the deep blue sea which washes the walls of Nice; and, fringing it, the white houses themselves.

My visit in 1867 was to meet an artist friend, to draw, and return. On my second, we strayed down and through Valauris, making our way back to Cannes down the picturesque gorge which issues at Golfe-Jouan, and then by the long miles of highroad; a wearying walk for a sultry evening.

CHAPTER VIII.

Grasse and the Pont à Dieu.

AMONG the conspicuous objects in nearly all the views from the back of the forest at Cannes, is the town of Grasse, famed for its manufacture of scents, and its preparation of dried fruits. Under the great bank of mountains which closes the scene northward, nestles a mass of white houses and towers, dense in the centre, and scattered for many a mile round as lodges and villas among the blue of distant groves.

Thither, in April, 1868, my companion and I bent our steps, anxious to explore Grasse itself, and to make an excursion to the famous Pont à Dieu, a natural bridge, some miles beyond. The "Grasse road" is a favourite drive with our countrymen at Cannes; and no wonder. It is more varied than that already described to Auribeau, and abounds with interesting views of the distant mountains, with a foreground of picturesque villages. To the right, up one of the rough lanes of the country lies Mougin, where the "place" of the village commands a grand view of the mountains towards Nice; and beyond it, also to the right, is the white chapel of Notre Dame de Vie, embosomed in olive and cypress. The increasing fields of roses are a feature on the way to Grasse. Acres on acres we see the low bushes, planted in rows, and trained into symmetry. At this time the buds are just beginning to show colour, and here and there a bloom glitters from among the light green.

And so with hill and dale, and at last a long upward sweep, we reach Grasse—a town of few, and those mean streets; but of multitudes of pretty villas smothered in lavish verdure and bloom.

The day is glorious—broiling sun with hardly a cloud. We agree with a driver at the inn, lunch under mine host's pergola, and start for the Pont à Dieu at once. The whole road is an upward slope, and mounts over the first line of great hills at the back of Grasse. The view is also

glorious. Along the south-east horizon lies Corsica, with its ranges of snowy mountains, spread out as in a map. There can be no mistake this time, for the sea line is perfectly clear, without one speck of vapour to mislead the eye.

A tedious two hours of walking pace, and at last of zigzags, brings us to the little mountain town of St. Vallier. Here we leave our vehicle, and start off under the guidance of a cheery old garçon, for the Pont à Dieu.



THE PONT À DIEU.

Let none but young and sturdy do the same! The distance is about five miles. For some way the main road is followed, and all goes merrily enough. But, in contemplation of what is to come, I strongly advise taking the carriage every step that it can go, *i.e.* to the spot where the road is left for the gorge. From thence the path leads away over a stony waste for many a mile, and is fatiguing in the extreme. The footing is

very like broken tiles set on edge, with sufficient gaps between to make it necessary to pick the way with some care: while the sun beats full on the light grey rock, not only producing the temperature of a furnace, but making the surface, on which the eye is compelled to be fixed, burn with an intolerable glare. To sit and rest is impossible: you might as well sit on the kitchen hob. At last, after some miles of this, one is delighted to enter an ilex grove, traversed by a path comparatively smooth. At first the eyes have been so dazzled, that all seems dark, and the brushwood salutes our brows and faces more than is agreeable. But soon the grateful green restores the sight, and we stoop to gather periwinkle and orchis, and find a shady rock for ten minutes' repose.

And now down, down, into the deep gorge of the infant Siagne, and we find ourselves on the Pont à Dieu; a bridge of tufa, beneath which the imprisoned stream has worked its way. At present it babbles sleepily beneath, and issues in two tinkling rapids. But in flood time I have no doubt that the fury of the water must be something terrific; for the whole of the arch is evidently conscious of watery power; there has been no fall of rock, but the whole has been scooped by honest labour of the diligent little river.

We climb down to the southward face of the bridge amidst the ilexes and periwinkles, and maiden-hair fern; and there the sketch opposite was taken. Our garçon comforts us with the assurance that there is another way back, not so terrible. This certainly was true; but then it was proportionably longer.

My advice to all but the hardy and adventurous would be, don't go to the Pont à Dieu; not for any perils of the way, but because, though certainly a strange route and an interesting object, there is not enough to repay so much fatigue.

We were anxious to see St. Cézaire, a village perched on the precipitous side of the gorge, some miles lower down. We had heard much of this place at Cannes, as being the spot whence a supply of pure water was being diverted for the use of Cannes and Grasse. After some driving we reached it, but not before the short April day had given place to dusk; and then came a very long dark return, which we thought never would end, to Grasse.

Our host of the hotel, after giving us a capital dinner, marched us away with our bed-candlesticks across the street, and into a garden sweet

with orange-blossom, and echoing with nightingales. There he put us up in a kind of kiosk or summer-house, fitted up with three or four very spruce little bedrooms, shining with their waxed tile floors. Here we were left, in solitude, and not without some curiosity as to what would meet our eyes in the morning. We peered out of every window, but in vain; all was heavy with orange-blossom, all was vocal with nightingales; but as dark as chaos.

The morning broke to reveal to us a glorious view over orange-gardens and quaint houses towards Cannes and the sea. We spent the former part of the day in inspecting the manufactures of the place, the manifold sweets of M. Négre's far-famed dried fruits, and the sweets of a more volatile kind produced by M. Court. We were not able to witness the fabrication of scents in all its activity, seeing that it is confined to the month of May; but what we did see was full of interest. It was high violet time, and the curious process of extracting the scent was going on. We were informed that the violet and the jasmine are far too delicate to yield up their odours to any distillation such as will serve for the coarser flowers, and we were shown the only method by which those odours can be arrested.

Let the reader imagine a vast number of exaggerated schoolboys' slates, with somewhat thick, heavy frames. Let him spread each slate on both sides with fine lard thinly and evenly distributed. These slates are so constructed that one may exactly lie on another, and a space be left between each, enclosed by the frames, which fit exactly. Thus we have the preparation made. Then bring your pails or baskets full of violets. Scatter the flowers thick on the lard of one slate. Lay it on the floor, and place another on top of it. Fill that also with violets, and repeat the process till the heap reaches the ceiling. Do the same with another heap, till you have a large stack of slates. Take them all down and refill them three times a day during the whole blooming time, *i.e.* for three months. By that time the lard will have become thoroughly impregnated with the exquisite scent.

But now comes perhaps the most curious part of the process. The lard, thus prepared, is put into a large metal cylinder fitted with a smaller revolving cylinder armed with teeth to crush and whip up whatever is submitted to its action. On the lard is poured in a quantity of oil or spirit. Then the machine is set in motion; and as the crushing and

whipping up goes on, the lard yields its scent to the oil or spirit, which is more susceptible of impregnation by it. And thus the "violet," or "jasmin," as found in the markets, is produced; the lard meanwhile retaining enough sweetness to be manufactured into pomade.

In the afternoon of this day, we drove to the "Saut du Loup," a rocky rapid of the river thus called. We were chiefly attracted to it by the imposing appearance, as seen from the forest of Cannes, of the great bluff which buttresses the gorge southward. But as seen close, there is nothing remarkable in the gorge to make it worthy of record by a sketch.



GRASSE.



CHAPTER IX.

Antibes.

A VERY quaint old place is Antibes, picturesque in the extreme, and full of subjects for drawing.

* * * * *

Our first view was taken from an ancient doorway about fifty yards south of the principal tower. The morning of the day which we consecrated to Antibes had been, alas, wet, and utterly impracticable: but after mine host's ample 11 A.M. *déjeuner* it did cease raining, and the distance became moderately clear. As usual at such a time here, the colours were wonderful. The absence of the sun seems sometimes a boon rather than a disadvantage as leaving sky and sea to hold their own tints without obvious help.

Much certainly could not be said for the former on this occasion, the material consisting entirely of heavily-laden cloud: but the sea was past description in grand contrast. The near portion was, where not beaten into foam, of a light creamy green. Enormous waves were thundering in against the shore, as an easterly gale had but just ceased. I believe here is almost everywhere deep water close in-shore on this coast: I suppose, from the circumstance, that the impact of the water has been for many ages in the same place, whereas on our coasts it is shared by a considerable extent of surface. For this reason the Mediterranean seems to exceed our seas in the vertical height of waves. At least I cannot otherwise account for the fact that here we have very often these enormous billows, more than twenty feet high, whereas, on the Cornish coast, with the whole ground swell of the Atlantic behind them, the breakers chiefly run frothing over a quarter a mile of surf before they reach the shore.

Beyond this field of light green and dancing spray, the contrast is as sudden and vivid as can be imagined. First, a very narrow band of bright emerald green, and then a broad line of the deepest possible purple, extending to the horizon southward, and east and north to the dull blue coast.

The latter is seen in its now, to me, familiar contour. Westwards, the great bluff over St. Jeannet, then following to the right the mountains of the Var valley, then *Mont Chauve (Monte Calvo* it was in the good old pre-annexation days) over Nice, then *Testa del Can* over Monaco, and *Mont Berceau* over Mentone, till, far beyond, the long range wastes gently down towards the palmy Bordighera.

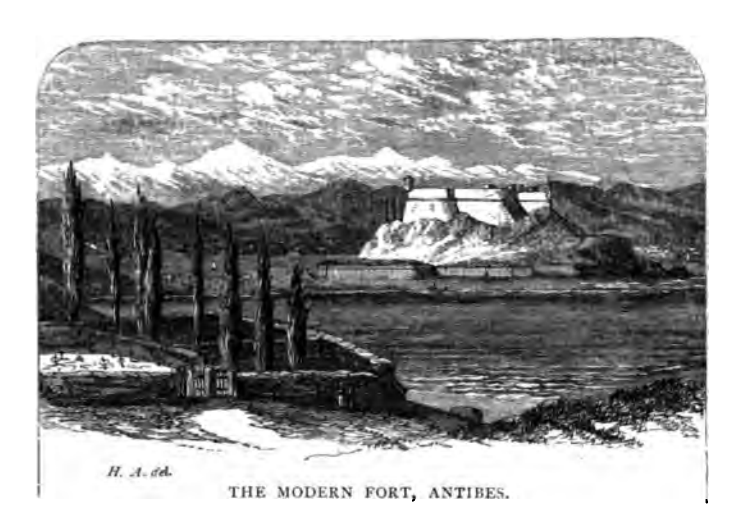
Over all this a veritably cold-looking giant or two protrudes his apex of greenish-white snow, and behind him is a kind of rack of half snow, half mist, inexpressible by any brush, indicating that it is a very cold place where it comes from.

A few sea-birds wheeling about in silence (I have never heard them utter a cry on this coast) seem to show that there is more of the same weather in store.



Such is this glorious Antibian view on a day of cloud and storm. What it is on a bright day I had this year no opportunity of judging, so that I must fall back on the experience of last year and the year before, for both of which visits I had a splendid hot sun at Antibes.

On the former occasion the view was taken which stands second in order. It was drawn, not from the walls of the town, but from the second of the little bays which occur on the way to the Phare or lighthouse. I never saw sky and sea in greater glory than on this day, and I suppose there is hardly a spot in Europe where the combination of both is seen with more beautiful effect, or in richer setting. Of course *the* point of view is from the Phare itself, but, like other grand panoramas, it is utterly undrawable. The best subjects are found



THE MODERN FORT, ANTIBES.

(1) just above the railway station, between it and the town; (2) at the second bay, as above specified; (3) on the rise from the beach to the Phare, among the stations of a Calvary, one or two of which are picturesque objects in the foreground.

About the first of these I have a story to tell. In 1867, being at the Beau Site at Cannes, I had fixed my day for drawing at Antibes, the 1st of April. In the morning I found my watch had run down, so at breakfast I wound it up, and set it by the clock in the *salle.* At 10.30 I set out to walk leisurely to the station for the 11.0 train to Antibes. Not a cab nor an omnibus there, only a solitary porter. "Que cherchez vous, Monsieur?" The train for Antibes. "Mais, Monsieur, il a parti justement une heure." I had set my watch an hour too slow, and thus the great institution of the day was honoured. The result was an unsuccessful sketch at the back of Cannes, and a hurried visit to Antibes by a 2 o'clock train, giving me only an hour and a half there. It became a necessity to take post close to the station, and so the merits of site No. 1 were discovered.

The extreme point (le Cap) of Antibes is well worth a visit: not to see the "Villa Close," nor the strange tomb, but to roam among the curious little coves in the reef of rocks, and to find, what are so rare on this part of the Mediterranean coast, sea products and animals, great prickly urchins, pieces of coral adhering to the ribbon sea-weed, and bits of soft fine sponge fit for cleaning one's colour-box. If refresh-

ment be part of the programme, there is a row of fine cork trees not far from the Cape, affording a delightful shade.

They are now building a large hotel on this point. I had hoped to find it open, but there is some hitch about forming an Antibes company to conduct it, and it is not unlikely to remain a mere shell. I committed myself to the one omnibus which presented itself at the station, and was deposited at the end of a street too narrow to drive up, to make my way to a most primitive inn. It was evidently the first hotel in Antibes, for I dined in the cheery company of the chief citizens. Breakfast, in one sense, was impracticable. The *salle-à-manger* was being swilled out, with all the chairs inverted on the top of the table. I had to take refuge in the kitchen, where the good mother was dressing her children for school, and to share with them their breakfast of bread and milk. Discouraged at first, they soon found out the fun of the position, and we parted hearty friends.



H. A. del.

VENCE.

CHAPTER X.

The Var Valley.

THE next station on the line, after Antibes, rejoices in the name of Vence-Cagnes. This is, in fact, a union of the names of two places, —Vence and Cagnes, some miles apart the one from the other. The latter may be seen perched on a high hill to the left of the line. A most curious and interesting place it is: fully fortified, with a huge machicolated chateau, and a high church tower; and the sides of its steep bristling with aloes, and rising out of many orange gardens, now gleaming with their rich rosy fruit, and dotted here and there with graceful palms. I regretted much that our time forbade a visit to Cagnes, and still more this year ('69), when my intended visit and sketches there were frustrated by the wretched weather.

We pass up the sides of the Gorge of St. Pol, of which the same regrets, similarly repeated, must be written, to Vence, the other component in the name of the station. This again is a hill-built village, but in its turn over-topped by the large bluffs in which terminate the range of the mountains on the right bank of the Var. The highest of these, at the foot of which is St. Jeannet, is a conspicuous object in all the westward views from the hills at the back of Nice.

At Vence were found a primitive but comfortable inn, looking on the

Grande Place, which is curiously buttressed out by rocks immediately over a deep ravine. We went out exploring, and found the spot whence our sketch is taken ; the three great promontories glowed with the warm rays of the declining sun, and the olives, and tender green thickets of fig and vine, were echoing with the gushes and trills and whistles of nightingales. An outline was put in—the colouring of the mountains got through, and the middle distance reserved for another session.

On the next day, we visited the Var villages. The road was most interesting, especially about S. Jeannet, the village seen glittering at the foot of the cliffs in our view of Vence. We pass a deep gorge of the river Cagne, with mills nestling right under the big bluff: the rocks moist, and fringed with maiden-hair fern, the banks teeming with flowers,—the rich blue lithospermum (gromwell),—the blue polygala (milkwort), enormous in size; a flowering rush with lovely blue blossom ; pink crane's-bill; large conspicuous bunches of wild thyme in flower; cistus, white, yellow, and pink. The country is very rich in wheat, olive, fig, beans, &c., and fields of roses and violets under blossoming apple-trees.

As we go up the Var valley, it is wonderfully beautiful. At the end, the snowy Alps: next them grand mountain outlines varying in all shades of purple and blue, and as they approach nearer, showing their scars of grey and red rock, and dappled with forests of black-blue pine. The villages are perched about on all sorts of heights.

As we turn a curve over Carrozza, the view becomes grand in the extreme. The Var beneath, making a curve to the right: on the left, a small river joins it (the Esteron): mountains of all shades of rich colouring: and, perched on various points of vantage, no less than eight villages. At a point about a mile in advance of that just described, a clear bright spring under a large oak invited our driver to bait his weary beast, and ourselves to dispose of our lunch, and take a siesta in the shade.

The day had been bright, but had gradually become less and less clear; and soon after we arrived at Le Broc, the end of the wheel road (the central object in our view), the mists began to descend on the lower mountains. It was not long before all outlines were obliterated. This saddening process had begun, when the second of our views, looking back on Le Broc, was taken. The cloud may be seen just dropping over the cap of the mountain on the left, and the whole view has become sombre.

I have been since informed that hardly anything can be finer than



H. A. delt. Vincent Brooks Day & Son, lith.

VALLEY OF THE VAR, FROM ST ROMAIN

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the scenery higher up the Var; and that an artist might well spend a month or more among the villages. It would be a delightful expedition. One must, of course, be independent of wheels; and the lodging would be primitive enough. But in such "roughing" there is always more pleasure than annoyance, even at the time. The simple people are uniformly kindly and bright: and one gets more cheering talk, and more insight into ways and thoughts, than in tenfold the travel among the beaten tracks of the world.



LE BROC.



FROM FALICON.

CHAPTER XI.

Nice.

A non-colouring day. Fair, but with one immense cloud, casting all light and no shadow.

Having a thorough dislike for this great stultified half Torquay, half Paris, I set out, armed with luncheon, and a light drawing apparatus, in case of an outbreak of sun. First, to the end of the Promenade des Anglais, now extended as far as the Magnan : then up the bed of the said torrent, determined, with the day before me, to ascend as far as there was any going up. The walk began along a road through villas and orange gardens, and by a dry river-bed, except for a pool here and there, round which sat groups of laundresses in their baskets plying their trade.

After a few miles the gorge becomes narrower : the road ceases to be an artificial one, and simply merges in the pebbly bed of the torrent. At about every fifty or sixty yards the stream has to be jumped or crossed on stepping stones. The banks are perpendicular bluffs of gravel, clothed or not clothed with vegetation, and abounding with deep hollows and side-gorges. I went up one of these just now, and came upon a flock of goats with their Tityrus and Melibœus cropping the cytisus and juniper and myrtle. Two little urchins tempted me on by a promise of rare plants, till the gorge became almost too narrow to squeeze through : but I found they meant merely the hart's tongue fern, which about here is not common.

* * * * * *

Sitting at the end of the track up the bed of the Magnan, where a natural arch, strengthened with masonry, spans the bubbling stream. This is the very place where, eight years ago, B. and I discerned, higher up on yonder bank, thickly fringed with maiden-hair, the much-sought Pteris Cretica, with its yellow-green palmated fronds. He, mounting with his feet on my shoulders, and the human ladder being exalted on a fortunate mound, soon, but not without difficulty, grasped the prize: and it still survives in full luxuriance in our little conservatory at Canterbury, and has become the parent of numerous offset plants. The said bank is at present clothed with enormous fronds of the maiden-hair, but I cannot descry any other specimen of the Cretica. I found it in profusion three years later in the gorge of the Molini at Amalfi, but had not equal success with the bit I brought home. We shall hear of it again before the end of our note-book.

The graceful Sarsaparilla, with its bright red berries, grows in this glen to an unusual size and beauty. A wilder spot than this can hardly be imagined.



I made my way back to Nice by a path which springs upward from the natural bridge and crosses the Col di Serena, having a magnificent view of the mountains behind, from the great bluff over S. Jeannet to Monte Calvo, and commanding the whole valley up to its foot, with Aspromonte glittering in the declining sun. And then down by many a winding path round olive terrace, and past many an angry watch-dog, through the picturesque *Vallon Obscur* into the town.

The next day by Cimiès to Falicon. This is one of the villages perched on wearisome heights, with which all the South abounds. The road for carriages has quite recently been made, and is for the greater part of the way deep in loose stones. The view given is from beyond the village, looking down into the gorge above S. Andrea.

On leaving, the new road descends at once by zigzags, commanding charming views at every turn, into the gorge, and rejoins the main road by S. Andrea into Nice.

CHAPTER XII.

Villafranca.

OUR description shall be borrowed (with permission) from a recently-published story (Netherton-on-Sea: Tinsley Brothers, 1869); premising that our point of view is further north than that apparently chosen in the description, and, consequently, somewhat different in its bearings. "The spot was just where the road turns a sudden corner to the north-east, and discloses a deep blue land-locked harbour, with a fortified village at its head. Opposite is a low promontory *(further to the right than our picture)*, with a white lighthouse at its point. At first bare, as it trends northward it becomes clothed with olive-woods, and dotted with white cottages, while a bright line of yellow rocks, fringes it on the edge of the water. At about the mid-view a little bay forms an indentation, answering to a dip in the outline above, over which was seen, beyond a streak of blue sea clearer and lovelier than the harbour itself, the glittering gray and yellow rock-wall of the warm cove called *la petite Afrique*, ending in the high bluff the *Testa del Can*, or "dog's head;" beneath which lay, by them unseen, the quaint little principality of Monaco. Further on still lay another stretch of shore, equally lovely in colour, but varying into a creamy rose madder, inconceivable except by those who have seen southern views—a long, gracefully-wasting promontory, ending with the white houses, shining as even the extreme distance does in this Elysian land of the balm-thicketed Bordighera.

"As the eye followed round still northward, it reached a long stretch of new wall *(about which our sketch has been a little unfaithful. It really reaches unbroken from the railway to the water)*, a sad substitute for the many-coloured rocks which once bordered the curve of the harbour, but one to be well content with, seeing that it carries the railway which, ere long, will bring Mentone within thirty-six hours of London. Nearer still lay the village, picked out into the decided lights and shades of a sunny day in the South. The morning had been wet, after a long drought; and, in consequence, every colour was at its best, and every outline at its clearest. Above the village rose a high hill, dappled into bright, and dark with olive-wood and irregular rock; below it lay stretched at their feet the little



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VILLA FRANCA HARBOUR

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harbour, with its sheltering wall, run out into the water, which, as is well known to observers of the sea, put on a lovely emerald green as it neared the shore. On the walls of the fortifications, which dominated the harbour, rose several graceful palms ; and the white campanile of the village prettily terminated our course, while the rest were capped with small turrets, shining out with bright-red conical roofs.

"The immediate foreground was furnished by the rocks above-mentioned, which projected seaward from the road and its fencing-wall, and with their rich stains of burnt sienna and gray, relieved by bunches of glaucous-leaved valerian, in full flower, formed an admirable base for the picture, throwing into strong contrast, in their shade, the sunny water some hundred feet beneath."



CHAPTER XIII.

Peglione.

I MADE a memorable expedition with an artist friend in 1867 to Peglione, the strangest of rock-built villages.

We left Nice in one of the little "shandry-dans" from the stand at the Pont Neuf, and drove about five miles on the Turin road. After passing La Trinité and Drap, both on the torrent-bed of the Paillon, we arrived at a little hostelry, at a point where the road deserts the main stream of the torrent and proceeds straight on, leaving the Paillon to the right. Here we deposit our trap to await our return, and make up the bed of the river by a rough mountain path. After some miles of walking and climbing—with tempting views at almost every turn, neglected from the necessity of pushing on,—we came in distant sight of a village resembling more those wonderful monasteries in Mr. Curzon's book,—'Meteora,' and the like,—than a place for ordinary men and women to dwell in; and go in and out of.

We approached it by infinite zigzags, shelved in the loose debris of disintegrated rock, of which the sides of the wide ravine were formed. Very picturesque were the groups of men, women, children, and donkeys, defiling along this path. It was a broiling walk, for the path is on the

north side of the gorge, and full in the eye of the glaring mid-day sun. Now and then we entered a shady dingle, with its cold water for the thirsty soul; but then there was the long dazzling reach of burning yellow stone to be grappled with ahead. It seemed a wonder how we were ever to attain the village, which appeared as if hung in the sky; but by-and-by we climbed a steep side gorge, and behold we were level with the *place d'armes* outside the gates.



Passed through the street, we sought a shady seat in the narrow defile behind, where to sketch and lunch. While thus employed we were startled by the sound of voices behind, and found that a party of English, from Mentone (from which and Nice Peglione is equi-distant), had established themselves close by. My artist friend recognised acquaintances among them, and our sketching and lunching camps were fixed together.

The larger view which I have selected out of this day's portfolio was taken as we returned, when the sun had fallen far west. The zigzags have all been descended, and the path has come down to the wide pebbly bed of the Paillon. The shadow is falling dark and sharp upon the strange ravine to the right of the village.

CHAPTER XIV.

Monaco—Natural.

WE now approach a spot which cannot be regarded by the lover of Nature but with feelings curiously compounded. This compound we will ask leave to resolve into its constituent elements, and of those elements to take first that which is most agreeable.

On leaving Nice the old Corniche road first mounts a long and tedious hill, relieved however by splendid views from its zigzags of the city and coast lying beneath. At length the road reaches the brow of the ridge behind Nice, and then for some miles the northward view takes the traveller's attention. The broad bed of the Nice torrent, the Paillon, lies more than a thousand feet below. Rising on its opposite bank are all the well-known objects of our Nice excursions and visits. Various ranges of the lower mountains rise one over the other, and are backed, as usual, by the snowy giants of the Col di Tenda, over which passes the route from Nice to Turin.

Before long this view is lost in the windings of the road, which still continues to ascend until the opposite view over the sea bursts on the sight; and then the traveller has before him the true glory of the Riviera journey at its most glorious point. This piece of road from Nice eastward for about ten miles is the finest on the whole route. The elevation attained, and in consequence the sea view, is the greatest; the coast is most picturesquely indented with bays, and crowned with splendid promontories; and the romantic rock-built towers of Eza, visible in various positions for many miles, give a centre of interest to the whole.

All this is now lost to the traveller by the opening of the railway. And certainly, however slow one may be to sympathize with lamentations over fine country being spoilt by lines of rail, one cannot forbear in this case joining in the common outcry. Never was a contrast so thorough as between the two journeys. The one perhaps the choicest bit of route to be



Vincent Brooks Day & Son, lith

MONACO, FROM THE EAST

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found in Europe,—one along which the most insensible of tourists can hardly be conveyed without emotion, and which cannot fail to touch and impress, in a way never to be forgotten, those who have ordinary eyes and feelings. The other, a series of plunges from light into dark, only varied by the shouting of names of stations, which were once full of associations of beauty, and beauty only. The traveller by rail for the first time sees his fellow passengers, as before, buried in their wraps and their Tauchnitz novel, pass without even a look a tract which to him has ever been little less than Elysian.

We shall crave permission therefore, to keep to the old road, and to cherish the hope that no visitor to Nice or to Mentone will fail, health permitting, once at least in each " sense " to make the journey between one town and the other in the old-world fashion.

A series of gradual ascents, varied by now commencing bits of trotting, brings us in sight of a village topped by a massive shapeless ruin. This is Turbia, the ancient *Tropæa Augusti*, a name explaining itself. And the mass of ruin is the agglomeration of a mediæval fortress over the original trophy, the nucleus of which is still traceable in a huge drum of immense stones.

Before we reach Turbia a road drops down into the valley to the left. This is well worth the traveller's exploring. At the distance of about two miles it reaches the picturesque old monastery ("La Madonna di Laghetto"), famous in recent history as the place of the retreat and of the abdication of the unfortunate Charles Albert, father of the present King of Italy.

From Turbia a paved foot and bridle road descends upon Monaco. By all means let this also be once at least traversed. The glorious sea view the whole way,—the opening glimpse of the quaint little city crowning its promontory,—the stretch of coast now first becoming distinguishable into its headlands and cliffs,—the grand many-coloured rocks towering over the path,—and not least, the luxuriance of tropical vegetation now first spread around, will amply reward the rather tiring downward tramp over slippery pavement, and round endless zigzags.

The position of Monaco is best seen however by keeping the high road, which, now beginning its descent in earnest, follows the curve of the coast till beneath the village of Roccabruna, which it skirts but does not enter, the right window of the carriage nearly faces the eastern side of

Monaco. At any point along this road pictures of Monaco may be made. The sketcher will only find himself bewildered amidst the endless variety of natural incident which he may take for his foreground. Sometimes terraced walls supporting grand old olives, stretch away down a ravine, framing the deep-blue sea and the long castellated headland. Sometimes a great aloe fills in the base of the sketch, and cuts the sea-line with its tall skyward candelabrum. Sometimes a bright dash of the vivid green of the lemon or orange begins below his feet, under the buttresses of red and yellow rock, and stretches away until it joins the inland sea of verdure which girds the coast; or a thick shaded caroüba tree winds its large serpent-like arms about in the sky, and the graceful forms of its glazed compound leaves border the picture as with a wreath.

Thus playing with our sketch, we have come to the point where the only carriage road descends back upon the little principality. Let us follow it; for it threads the loveliest bit of the whole Riviera. One little specimen we have given; but to every reader we can only say, Go and see it for yourself.

After a mile or two of lavish beauty of land and sea, and verdure and rock, we reach the new Monaco, which is now growing up about the great Casino, of which more hereafter. The road passes through the quadrangle formed by the buildings, descends on the bright little bay with its shipping, the "guarded mount" rising in front. Arrived at the base, we leave the carriage to perform its long tedious climb round the promontory, and take the paved foot and bridle way which mounts straight, or rather, what some one called "slantindicular," to yonder postern gate. Quaint and curious in the extreme is the ascent. The whole character and grouping of the buildings forcibly recall stage scenery. We expect every moment to come upon beams and strings and carpenters' properties. It is a pasteboard fort turned into stone. Much of this effect is owing to the bizarre bifurcated battlements which are in vogue at Monaco, and to the little pierced turrets which hang out at every corner. Nor is the illusion lessened, when one remembers that one is in the dominions of a Grimaldi.



Under first one frowning arch, and then another more sullen still, we enter the town, and find ourselves in an open piazza, nearly square. The northern side is formed by the somewhat flat and glaring palace. West-



PALACE AT MONACO.

ward are trees and seats among the old-fashioned cannon, which repose, like the stuffed fauna of another period, at due intervals along the walls. The southern side is formed by the *ci-devant* first hotel (now eclipsed by the great Hôtel de Paris at the Casino), and by the ends of the two little streets running to the back of the promontory. Eastward is an open space looking over the ramparts. It is dotted with piles of cannon-balls, over which young Monaco is evermore gambolling. At the gate of the palace stands a solitary sentinel, whose solitude however is ever and anon relieved by groups of townsmen or strangers making him the centre of their gossip. And high over the palace, with its horned battlements and white clock tower, rises the great gray and red Testa del Can, every marking of its rock sharp and clear in the slightly westering sun, and every pine and yellow euphorbia at its feet distinct in light and shade.

Pass under the trees and look over the westward ramparts. There is a brisk bright breeze, and the waves are hurrying up to try their force against the rock fifty fathoms below. Look over.—what a violent greeting you get from the reverberated wind!—what a dash of salt mist! Recover your surprise, and contemplate that water below. Was ever turquoise clearer,—was ever emerald more flashing, as it lies in dark repose in the hollows, or shimmers sunlit in the shallows? How strange the downward rock, fringed with bristling aloes, or crimson with blossoming valerian and stocks!

Now follow along yon path, which passes the last house to the left. Then you get round the walls to the southward, or sea face of the

promontory. And as we have imagined the whole a pasteboard show turned into stone, we will now take the liberty to change the scene, and transcribe a portion of our journal on the spot.

* * * * *

In the bright moonlight, out to the public gardens round the promontory at Monaco. The brightest full moon I ever saw, making a broad track of flame on the waves. Wandered about the gardens, exploring paths, descending by slopes, and sometimes by steps, among aromatic shrubs, glistening in the pale light with drops of dew. At one place, where the path is carried out to a point of rock projecting over the sea, sat and watched the track of light. The eastward coast trended away, distinctly visible, to Ventimiglia and Bordighera. But that track of flame, it was the one object of observation and study.

I noticed the following things respecting it:—

1. There was a dark space in the sky under the moon, distinctly marked, from her disk to the sea line.

2. There was a very distinct dark line on the horizon, terminating the glorious pathway of light on the water.

3. There was, about one third of the way from the shore to the horizon, a place where the dancing lines in the track of light became sparkles, and ceased to be lines.

4. On the margin of the track of light, and especially of this last-mentioned space, the leaping and flashing of the sparkles in the dark water was most glorious.

5. All the rest of the path of light was composed of what artists call "cross hatchings" of lines of light and shadow; but in the distance, and before the dark horizon-line above mentioned was approached, it became a calm field of light at perfect rest.

CHAPTER XV.

Monaco—Social.

A GOOD deal has been said of Nature at Monaco, and too much hardly can be said in its praise. But there is another matter to be dealt with besides the loveliness of the spot.

Little care the greater part of the present frequenters of Monaco for its natural beauty: or if they do care, it is only as for the setting of the gem, not for the gem itself.

The present attraction of Monaco is the disgraceful gaming table, and it is not too much to say that its centripetal force draws thither the scum of the world. Of the two petty sovereigns who now are blots upon Europe, it is perhaps difficult to say which is on the whole the worse, the ruler of the smallest principality in the world on this escarped rock, or the ruler of the next smallest on the banks of the Tiber. Both are under the protection of the French Emperor, and owe their existence to his weakness. But the Prince of Monaco has at least this in his favour: that his appropriations are not perpetrated in the name of religion. When he robs he does it openly, drawing in napoleons with a rake, and not by the stealthy confiscation of charities for his own exchequer. So that we may venture to anticipate the future verdict of history, and, while we endeavour to do justice to the great institution which upholds the Prince of Monaco, not forget that there is a worse thing upheld by mankind.

The new Casino has been constructed at a short mile's distance from the palace and the old town. It occupies a delightful position on the first salient point of coast eastward, as one looks from the "guarded mount" itself. In front of it is a truly beautiful garden, wherein experiments on acclimatization of tropical plants are being tried, which may prove of real service to the neighbourhood. Behind the building stretches a quadrangle, the western side of which is occupied by the magnificent Hôtel de Paris (of which more by and by); the eastern by a café and

one or two shops; while the northern side is open to the hills, and forms the approach for the high road from Mentone and the east.

"Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis," *i. e.* the Casino is open night and day—from any reasonable time in the morning till the departure of the midnight special "train de jeu" for Nice. As I write, at Bordighera, late into the bedtime hours, I command the whole westward coast, darkly outlined under the keen stars. The few scattered lights of Ventimiglia have disappeared; Mentone shows but a half dozen of her street lamps curving round towards her western bay; the town lights of Monaco itself are reduced to a feeble few; while the great blaze of the Casino is still in all its splendour. Its "starry lamps and blazing cressets," like those of its great infernal predecessor, "yield light as from a sky."

But let us enter. First, a large hall of reception. The eye is attracted by a conspicuous notice that persons under age are not allowed to play, and that children are not permitted to enter the *salons de jeu.* A pretty ingenuous confession, that last. And as to the first, it at once strikes one, how are persons under age to be known, in any case in which it is important that they should be distinguished? in other words, in any case in which a doubt is likely to occur?

Next, a beautiful concert-room, supplied with one of the finest bands in Europe. No expense is spared, no decoration for eye or ear, to gild over the sulphureous pill. Respecting this same band, I was told that an English lady of title had once asked a question about some particular piece of music; whereupon the most bustling civility;—the *chêf* was sent for;—low obeisances, and a request that she would be pleased to order the next day's music. So eager are the purveyors to catch the least sound of a respectable name in association with their great decoy.

Now you enter the *salons,* of which there are two, with two tables in each. Of these four tables three are devoted to *roulette,* one to *trente et quarante.* Into the mysteries of the latter I did not attempt to penetrate. All seems to depend on eight, nine, or ten cards, which are turned up by the croupier. On the turn-up taking place, which is on the average about once in two minutes, the losers' money, which has been placed on the table, is raked off; and the winners are paid by throwing or pushing towards them the sum due. All passes in solemn silence, and *what* passes may be imagined, when it is stated that nothing

under a napoleon is allowed to be put on the table. On the second evening which I spent at Monaco (I was not tempted to renew my inspection of the Casino, preferring the moon-lit gardens) one lady, I was told, gained at this table no less than 6000*l.*

The more popular and more mischievous game is *roulette.* For those who have never seen it played I will attempt an explanation: premising that I will not warrant it against blunders, as it is merely the guess-work of a looker-on.

In the middle of the oblong table is a sunken disk, sloping downwards towards the centre, like Dante's 'Inferno.' The upper part of this is fixed, and presents an inclined plane of light polished wood. The lower part, which revolves, is fitted with small compartments or pigeon-holes, numbered and coloured, some red, some black. The table, as it extends away from the middle on either side, is marked out on its green cloth cover into various compartments, some figured with numbers corresponding to those in the disk, some answering to various elements of hazard, which may be based on the characters of the numbers or the difference of colour. In placing sums of money on these compartments respectively, the play consists. Sums may be staked on a certain number by depositing them on the compartment marked with that number. Or the stake may be divided between two by laying it on the intersection of the bounding lines of their compartments; or between four, by placing it on the intersection of the bounding lines of four numbers; or it may be staked on even or odd, or on red and black; or on the lucky number being either half the whole (36) or above it; or on its being among the first twelve, the second twelve, or the third twelve: compartments being reserved for each of these contingencies.

While the players are making up their minds and depositing their money, one of the croupiers (who have official seats in the middle of the table on both fronts) projects a small wooden ball into the smooth space among the numbers, at the same time setting the lower portion of the disk revolving in the opposite direction to the motion of the ball. For a second or two this latter spins round freely, but as its impetus slackens it is caught by various little brass pegs, placed on the lower rim of the fixed space, and after an instant of clattering and blundering among them, is lodged in one of the pigeon-holes below. Then the croupier, in the softest voice, announces the number. All is

at once understood. The rakes are set at work, pulling towards the croupiers for the losers, pushing from them for the gainers. A few seconds' breathing space is given, and the same process is repeated. And so on through the day and the night.

At the *roulette* table, as a notice announces, 5 francs is the minimum stake; 12,000 francs (480*l.*) the maximum.

Let us observe some of the phenomena. First among them is an aged lady, who is to be found at the *roulette* table every day and night. With tottering hands and imperfect sight (for I observed others were constantly obliged to do her the service of placing her stakes as they presumed she intended) she puts on the table at every throw of the ball first 400 francs (16*l.*) in four little heaps of 5 napoleons in each, then various little ventures of 5 or 10 francs in different parts of the table. Time after time, as I watched her, the whole was swept away. When her cash is exhausted, she passes a 1000 franc note to the croupier to be changed into gold, and goes on as before. What her long-run experience comes to I could not learn: during the hour of my watching she did not seem to win more than once out of twelve times. But then a loss cannot amount to more than the stake, whereas a gain may be ten times as much. The sight of this aged lady was one to be remembered with horror.

Let us take another scene. That young Englishman, evidently here for the first time, has staked a napoleon. To his surprise he has hit the very number into which the ball has dropped, and is a large gainer. But mark what happens. As he is taking up the heap of gold pushed to him by the croupier, another from behind steps forward and asserts that the stake was his. A few interpellations are exchanged, all in the most perfect civility; and the croupier, rather than have a disturbance, pays both. But the sharper, from behind, is watched and taken out (or make-believe taken out) at the first opportunity, by one of the liveried men in attendance. The great anxiety is to prevent public notice being attracted by anything untoward happening at the Casino. A paragraph going the round of the European papers might "burst up" the concern.

Various characteristics of this nefarious gathering at Monaco are worth mention.

I went to the old hotel in the town, opposite the palace, formerly

the "Hôtel de Russie," now "Du Prince Albert." In the rooms was a notice that all provisions and lodgement *must be paid for day by day*, a characteristic warning that one had got among rogues. And the same policy is pursued in the Hôtel de Paris at the Casino, where, at the *table-d'hôte*, a dish goes round to collect the payments before the guests leave the table.

This great hotel is got up with the utmost splendour; gilding and decoration are lavished in every quarter, the cuisine reputed the best in Europe. But there are certain set-offs, easily guessed, which should prevent at least English families from being too ready to establish themselves there.

As a pendant to the cool business-like air with which the infamous traffic of the table is conducted, it may be mentioned that if reports at Monaco may be credited, every season witnesses some suicides, which are of course carefully hushed up.

The nuisance has not passed without protest from the neighbourhood. One of the best known French pastors at Nice has written against it for a long period, and was the first, we believe, to give the short line of railway from Nice to Monaco the name of the *Chemin de l'Enfer*.

We may, perhaps, venture to hope that the whole thing is one of those plagues of mankind destined to cease with the life of the strange man who is, in the presence of God and of history, responsible for their continuance.

I may add that, were the Casino and all its riff-raff swept away, Monaco must in a few years, as one of the most lovely, and in parts the most sheltered spots of the Riviera, become the resort of invalids, and thus would, by the lawful rental of hotels and villas, amply refund the Prince for the 300,000 francs which he now receives yearly for the Casino from the great nameless potentate underground.*

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* The following account of a recent revolution at Monaco is from 'The Standard' of January last:—"Prince Charles of Monaco enjoys no exemption from the fate of more powerful sovereigns, though his principality consists of a barren rock and a narrow strip of shore. His subjects number about two thousand, but his army is limited to twelve veterans, half of whom might have advantageously been pensioned five years ago. Besides, the citizens have a real National Guard, two hundred strong, and pretty well armed, so that it is not difficult for them, as

solemn black: then, not unexpected, in the east, up floats the moon: first dull red, and pillowed in mist: then, while one is writing, launched clear and golden above the sea-line, which at first gives no token of her presence; then, as I watch, wave after wave takes up the beam, and dances under it, till the whole sea, from horizon to beach, is alive with flickering fire.

An hour onward, and all the lesser stars have disappeared—only Arcturus holds his own; and back in the blue heaven, now dark no longer, faintly twinkles the jewelled belt of Orion in the west, and the faithful pair of brothers more dimly seen southward.

The sea, all but the path of light, is a vast field of dark sullen gray, from which the shore and the buildings stand out, bathed in yellow light. As I write, the deep booming of the blasted rock, once, and again, and again, tells that not nature alone, but man also is at work; and completes the picture, by repeating in the distance the plunging of those restless waves.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Morning—how totally unlike evening, even in its likeness! The same, or nearly the same, orange glow: but the fact of momentary increase, instead of decrease, makes all the difference. The sea, pale blue again, but now, as it would seem, all astir with excitement.

And where is HE going to appear? For the glory extends all round the horizon. Ah, I think I see. That long flat line of cloud is kindling from purple to crimson—from crimson to golden—from golden to indescribable brightness. It sees what we cannot, but shall soon see. And yet between it and the horizon-line of sea are other lines of cloud, deep purple, not kindled as it is—Why?

Corsica, in all its length of mountains, is stretched along the sea-line to southward.

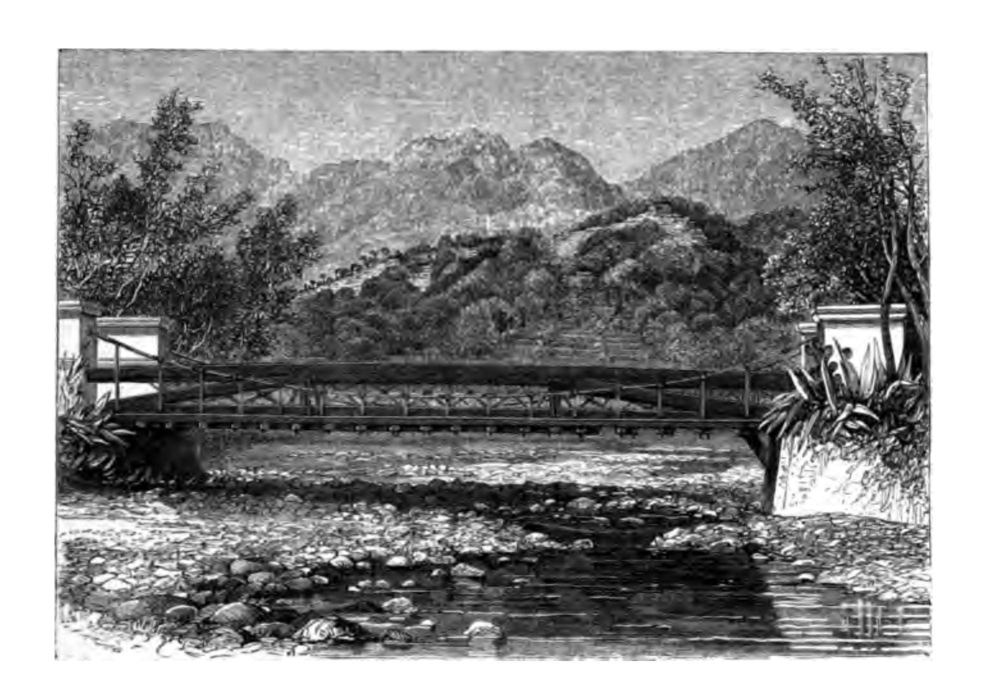
The golden cloud has now become pale yellow, and the mist beneath it has taken a duller hue of purple. Again—Why? For the great orb is close at hand. But these appearances are full of mystery. Now I see that he is not coming where the cloud is, but some way north of it, where an unmistakeable space of horizon is slowly gathering fire. Corsica is withdrawing its summits into the darkening mist. Hotter and hotter becomes that glorious space. The little cloud has faded off into the palest lemon yellow. At length the space becomes almost too bright for endurance by the eye, and the waves begin to tremble with lines of light. Opposite—but

one hardly dares to look opposite, for fear of missing the advent—the Testa del Can, over Monaco, is deep rose colour, and the quiet moon hangs over it, awaiting extinction.

At once—not in a spark, but in a mass of fire—the sun leaps up. "And God divided the light from the darkness." The light goes into its place, filling all things: and the shadows each wait on the lights till night shall come again.

Next day, at the same time, the scene is altogether changed. The previous day has been one of strong tramontane (N.E.) wind, and the sky is covered with processions of wild fiery clouds. But why, when the sun approaches, do they all, except those close to his point of appearing, fade off into purple shadow? Five minutes ago, all were ablaze with crimson and gold. This is another mystery. Again, his approach divides the clouds into upper and lower strata: the upper have put on a sober pale light, such as they might wear through the day: while the lower are as described.

Now once again he is up, and a blaze of golden light comes, barred by dull mists, over the sea, which chafes in its seething gray, and renders no note of the rising glory.



CHAPTER XIX.

Mentone.—S. Agnèse.—Gorbio.

UNLIKE Cannes, unlike Nice, unlike San Remo, Mentone boasts a magnificent back-ground of mountains, near enough to enter into every view, near enough also to be reached in many interesting excursions.

Having prefaced thus, I will at once direct the reader's attention to the copy in wood from a splendid photograph which heads this chapter.

The spot whence it was taken is under the suspension bridge which spans one of the torrents near the western entrance to Mentone. The ravine up which the spectator looks leads up to Gorbio; and perched upon the very highest crown of the mountains in the background is the village of S. Agnèse. The houses lie behind the ridge, and are not seen: but the square protuberance on the summit is the ruined castle, and on the sharp little point considerably to the left of this may be seen, even from Mentone, a slender iron cross. These two mark the extent of the village.

I started in good time, with a donkey-woman and her beast, for the climb to S. Agnèse. The road led for some way, as usual, up the bed of

a torrent. After we had passed a picturesque old mill we began to mount, and mounted continuously till we had *sur*mounted the great ridge before us. I had no idea, when we started, where S. Agnèse was: and considerable was my astonishment when, after some miles of progress, my guide pointed it out to me in the very skies, where, she said, it had been facing us from the moment we set out.

Perhaps the distant view from below is the most striking thing in this excursion. Once embarked on the rocky plateau, or the steep path which climbs from it, all is desolation and ribbed stone, with no very remarkable view—only woods and sea.

We made our way down the path which may faintly be traced in the woodcut sloping across the face of the rock, and returned to Mentone another way.

The next day I had bespoken my donkey-woman for another expedition to Gorbio: another rock-built village perched on its height, but in a valley, probably a thousand feet below S. Agnèse. The situation of it in our woodcut would be just where the line of dark pines, on the ridge of the middle-distance hills, dips to meet the outline of the hill from the other side.



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I took ample time to reconnoitre this primitive village. The two bits of street given in the vignettes will furnish some idea of the character of their mountain villages. Over these stones wheels have never passed, and it is no pleasant task to traverse them on donkeys, if we may judge from

the continual slides with the fore-feet, and slips down to the haunches with the hind legs, to which one sees one's countrymen nervously submitting.

On this day a "borrasco" was blowing, and it was impossible to sketch except under the lee of a building or in a ravine. I accordingly chose the latter for a view of the village mounted on its olive terraces, with the distant wood dipping down towards Mentone, and in the distance the town and church of Bordighera.



GORBIO.

We mounted over the ridge behind Gorbio, seen to the extreme left in our large wood engraving, and descended on Roccabruna. Nothing could be more beautiful than the bright green of the pines against the deepest of deep blue skies as we threaded the pine forest down upon the latter village. These cloudless gales always seem to produce a peculiar depth and brilliancy of sky. And the sea all the way to Monaco was lashing itself into fury, and leaping up the rocks with its crests of snowy foam.



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S. AGNÈSE FROM THE RIDGE ABOVE GORBIO.

CHAPTER XX.

The Ferrovia.

ONE of the curiosities of the Riviera, during the seven years of my acquaintance with it, is the future (?) railway from the French frontier towards Genoa. Its finished tunnels, its stacks of rails laid ready, from Bordighera onwards, its little bits of embankment cropping up here and there, have long ago become venerable institutions. The said bits of embankment have become sylvan with great yellow euphorbias; the stacks of rails have turned "like boiled lobsters," from black to red; and the country people have established short cuts through the tunnels. And now it is even rumoured that the Italian Government, having suddenly become aware that their coast-line will be open to bombardment from the sea, are doubting whether they shall not abandon it for one further inland.

Certainly, if the same diminution of speed as now prevails from Marseilles onward is to be proportionally maintained in the further part of the route, its non-completion will be no great loss to mankind. The trains from Nice to Monaco hardly reach ten miles an hour, including the tedious stoppages at stations where the appearance of a single passenger would be a fact to be noticed by the police.

It is really curious also to observe in one's excursions the progress of the works between Monaco and Mentone, which the French are supposed to be pushing energetically forward.* At several spots embankment work is proceeding. The "plant" consists of a single truck of enormous dimensions, and venerable in its amount of patching. When, with the usual ejaculation of "hee-up's" and hee's, this great omnibus has been brought near to its destination, the horses are leisurely detached from the front, and it has to be slowly pushed forward by hand to the edge of the embankment. One side of the truck is then let down, at the infinite peril of the workmen, and part of the load falls out. The next step is to drive

* This was written in March, 1869. This portion is now opened.

wedges under the inward side, in order to tilt the truck further. This done, the group of workmen sit down and watch it, and from time to time, with amazing demonstrations of energy, give the wedge more blows. At last the load moves off and falls over the side of the embankment, the great stones bounding away over the neighbouring field or road. The next thing is to pursue these stones and bring them back by hand. On one of my donkey-rides from Mentone, we were warned to stop while this marvellous process was being gone through. I thought a blast was expected; and in truth the warning was as much needed as if it had been; for stones of not less than half a hundredweight came flying in numbers across the road.

I need hardly remind the reader that embankment work with us is accomplished by self-tilting trucks, run at a trot towards the *end* of the embankment; that, at a short distance from the end, the horse is detached, the peg which kept the truck firm on the wheels is pulled out, and the truck, running on till it meets with the turned up rail at the end, tilts with the shock, and empties its load. The horse is then attached to the back of the empty truck, and it is drawn off into another line to make way for the rest, and thus, truck coming after truck in rapid succession, a vast amount of work is got through in the day.

Who is responsible for this ridiculous engineering does not appear. We can only say that at the rate it is now going on, the line to Mentone would take as many years as the Italian line will take centuries.

But, however short of attainable advantage the railway may prove when finished, it will be a deliverance from the present disgraceful "messageries" diligences, and thereby must confer a boon on the district. It is not too much to designate the Messageries Imperiales of No. 20, Notre Dame des Victoires, Paris, as an institution for the prevention of transit of men and goods. At present they occupy the ground with their great lumbering waggons, which ground, if they were out of the way, would instantly be better occupied by local enterprise. Even now every local omnibus which runs is faster, and better appointed, than the diligences.

And as to transit of goods, there are few who do not know that no reliance whatever is to be placed on the care or punctuality of the diligence. Luggage is almost as often carried past its destination as delivered at it. And when this is the case, remedy there is none. The very official who has the missing articles in his bureau will insolently and coarsely deny all

knowledge of them, and they may lie for weeks unnoticed, while their owner is searching a whole line of road in vain.

With reference to speed, I may mention what occurred but yesterday. I was detained at the comfortable Hôtel d'Angleterre at Bordighera, on account of my baggage having been carried on to Savona instead of being delivered. Having awaited in vain the arrival of the 10 A.M. diligence from Savona, I determined to walk over to Mentone and ascertain for myself how matters stood. The diligence had driven past the bureau with the simple announcement from the conductor, "*Il n'y a rien.*" The bureau is one-third of a mile from the hotel. I had to return to my room, and to announce my failure and my plan to the landlord. And after starting, I went back for something which I had forgotten.

The sun was broiling, and the mistral blowing rough against me. At the end of an hour, and of four miles of level road, I passed the diligence mounting the steep street at Ventimiglia. This gives as its speed about three miles an hour. On the descent from Ventimiglia it passed me, with infinite grinding of "*mecanique*," cracking of whip, and "hee-ups" of the postilion; but at the steep rise towards La Murtola I was almost up with it again; and it had only just reached Mentone when I arrived. I had done the ten miles in two hours and a half, and it in two hours and three-quarters.



MENTONE FROM THE EAST.

CHAPTER XXI.

Mentone to Bordighera.

YIELDING the palm of grand scenery to the portion of the Riviera between Nice and Mentone, we may safely say that, in point of interest, the award must be given in favour of that which heads our present chapter. It will be seen by what follows, that the incidents of the road are many; and our illustrations will be a warrant for the scenery.

Passing the quaint old terrace which overhangs the sea, we have the somewhat tiresome arc of the eastern bay to traverse,—then the débris of the railway which the French are making scrupulously up to the frontier,—before we begin to rise to the cliff road, which is to take us to Ventimiglia.

The first object of interest as we mount between the lemon-gardens, is the frontier of France and Italy—the Pont St. Louis. Certainly, thus much, and, as far as I know, thus much only, can be said for the present "rectification" of boundaries, that they have acquired a worthy spot

for the division of the two realms. If the natural boundary of a great river was to be forsaken, then few can complain of the gorge of St. Louis as a successor to the Var.

It is a magnificent rocky defile, with its stream and waterfall, made more picturesque by the remains of an old aqueduct by which the water has been carried to the olive-mills below. In our vignette, France is, of course, on the left, Italy on the right.



PONT ST. LOUIS.

The utmost that a pedestrian gets done to him on passing into Italy is, the politest of bows from the grizzled peak-bearded Frenchman in the sentry-box on the western side, and the laziest of nods, if provoked by a greeting on his part, from the two or three dark tall young Italians smoking their cigarettes under the shed of withered leaves on the eastern. His longer interview with the authorities is reserved till further on.

But let him not pass without a look of reminiscence, or an hour's exploration, if time serve, of the rocks beneath him on the right—the

Rochers rouges, so well known to all Mentonians. Dr. Bennet (Chap. III.) on the geology of the district, should be first studied, and such portions of Mr. Moggridge's book as point to the habitats of plants in this quarter.

There is a path carried along these rocks and following the indentations of the coast for some miles, which may be taken in preference to the highroad, or by way of change. The pedestrian must leave the road at the railway works, and cross the St. Louis torrent where the washerwomen work, on the beach. He will thence have no difficulty in tracing the path. But he will thus lose the exquisite ravine of La Murtola; and if the day be hot, will gain, with the sun beating on the naked rocks, about the most complete broiling he ever underwent in his life. I paid dearly for having taken this path, on such a day, with a sirocco blowing—in 1867,—by a three days' feverish attack at Mentone and Nice.

We will at present follow the more prudent traveller who keeps the king's highway. As he rises from the Pont St. Louis, let him cast abundant looks behind; for from hence is the loveliest view of Mentone in its blue eastern bay, and of the far-stretching mountain outline behind it.

Arrived at a solitary house and chapel at the top of the first hill, he loses this view for awhile, and descends through olive-terraces on the curious Italian custom-house. There, if on foot, he will be little troubled. Should he have brought biscuits, raisins, and an orange (my usual luncheon) in his pouch, he will find in the little osteria opposite the Dogana, some very fair country wine, with which to complete his meal.

At one of my passages through this custom-house last year, I was witness to quite a "sensational" scene. While I was eating my lunch, the lumbering diligence arrived from Mentone. At the first accents of the "*bella lingua*," a lady's voice exclaimed from the interior, "*Ah! siamo in Italia!*" And correspondent to her exclamation was her deportment; a thing read of in books rather than witnessed in actual life. During the prosaic, and one would think slightly corrective process of watching her trunks examined, she was shedding tears, and overflowing with joyous speeches; and when I left to mount the hill, she had not yet done her congratulations to herself and all around her; the Capo Stazione standing cap in hand, the polite victim of her exuberant happiness.

From the Dogana, a hot, straight, weary climb to the sharp turn


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and the arches of the bridge, may be made out to the right of the engraving. Of the Nervia, we shall have more to say shortly.

It is one of the dullest places, this many-bastioned Ventimiglia. Forts, forts, everywhere; even up to the very crown of the hills behind; for there is one far above the highest seen in our vignette. The entrance to the precinct of the town, is by a drawbridge, and past a *corpo di guarda*. What may be in these days the military strength of all this fortification, I can of course have no knowledge. The tendency all one hears and reads is, to lead one to infer that it is totally useless.

We have descended from the entrance-fort, down the side of the ugly clay cliff, with the platform leading to the town gate rising on our left, till we come to the sharpest of turns, and the road drops down through a steep perilous looking street, into the bed of the Roya. Let



AT VENTIMIGLIA.

the traveller look behind him from the bridge, and, indeed, often after; but especially from the bridge, that he may notice the genuine old church (the rarest article on the Riviera) of San Michele, with its brown campanile and rounded apse frowning on the opposite steep.

We now rise through the unattractive village of Convento, and so through the flat to the wide bed of the Nervia. Here a road strikes up to the left, leading along the torrent to that glittering village which ends the reach visible from hence. That is Campo Rosso: and about two miles beyond it is Dolce Acqua. The whole may now be done in a carriage, from Mentone or Bordighera. The road is full of picturesque points, and the old castle of the Dorias at Dolce Acqua well repays the fatigue of the détour.

Campo Rosso itself is a quaint and interesting old town ; it will be found amply described in Mr. Hare's 'Winter at Mentone.' But since that description was written, it has lost its "brown monks, looking down from its upper windows, or meandering about under the painted archways." However socially beneficial the suppression of the religious houses may have been, it has robbed these Riviera towns of one of their most characteristic features.



H. A. del.

AT DOLCE ACQUA.

The old tower, given in our vignette, stands between Campo Rosso and Dolce Acqua, to the right of the road. Above it, perched on a rock, is seen the chapel of Santa Croce, well known to excursionists from Bordighera.

We have now finished our supplementary excursion. Should the weather be fine and not too hot, it will not have inconveniently fatigued the pedestrian in his day's work from Mentone to Bordighera ; especially if he start early, and give time for a three hours' siesta, and sketch, at Dolce Acqua.



H. A. del.

NEAR CAMPO ROSSO.

The rest of our way is straight and flat, along the dusty road to Bordighera. That massive white building with a sort of spire-cupola, is the welcome Hôtel d'Angleterre, one of the cosiest lodging-places on the Riviera. It is no small comfort to find, away from the closeness and the smell of a town, a little colony of English, with their chaplain, their decorous little chapel, and their English-

speaking landlord. After putting in there many times on former visits, I was detained five days against my will this last spring, for reasons elsewhere in this volume detailed. And, much as I rejoiced at being set free to continue my journey, I own to having left M. Lozeron and his guests with much regret. That the memory of my pleasant detention may not be lost, I have given, at the end of the volume, a view of the scene in front of the hotel.



VENTIMIGLIA.



FROM STREET IN BORDIGHERA.

CHAPTER XXII.

A Day among the Palms.

SOME friends of mine reported, as their driver's assurance, that they had seen from the high road all that was to be seen of the palms at Bordighera.

Let no one believe it for a moment. This was doubtless all that the Laureate saw, or he would never have written the line:—

"Not the clipt palm of which they boast."

The palm-glory of Bordighera is not to be seen without going up into the town, and beyond the town. These noble trees almost gird it round on the western and northern sides, and grow in profusion—in coppices and woods—of all sizes, from gnarled giants of 1100 years' reputed age, to little suckers which may be pulled up by hand, and carried to England. And

there is no end to the picturesque groupings of these lovely trees, and their graceful effects in the sunlight.

In the sunlight. For of all trees, the palm is the child of the sun, and the best purveyor of flecked and dancing shade Under the palm-thickets every darkest spot of shadow is a grand medley of exquisitely traced lines; and on the verge of the bare sunlight outside, leap and twinkle a thousand sharply marked parallel bars of graceful leafage. And there is something peculiarly of the sun, and of the East, in the many depths of the noon-lighted palm wood—the yellow, and the pale green, and the rich burnt sienna of the various foliage; the rough deep markings of the rich brown stem; and now and then the burning chrome of the fruit-stalks hanging in profuse clusters out from the depths of central shade.

Nor is the least charm of the palm the silvery whisper of reeded fronds which dwells everywhere about and under it. With the palm, romance reaches its highest. That soft sound soothed the old-world griefs of patriarchs, and murmured over the bivouacs of Eastern armies. When the longers for Zion sat down and wept by the waters of Babylon, was it not the rough burr of the palm on which they hung their harps, rather than the commonly but gratuitously imagined branch of the willow? And when Judæa was again captive, it was under the palm that the conqueror, on his triumphant medals, placed the downcast daughter of Zion.

I have been told that there are probably now more palms at Bordighera alone, than in the whole of the Holy Land.

In order thoroughly to enjoy them, strike up from the main road opposite the landing-place. Observe a thicket on your left. There first take in the infinite variety of shape, tint, and shadow, which you will ere long see in far greater profusion. Then mount up to the town, and take the left hand path round it. Ere long you will come to an arched passage entering a steep street. Before passing through the arch, stop and look westward. In front of you are some old rough battlements, now (10 A.M.) glaring golden and purple in their sun and shade. Over them rise from below several graceful palms, and a cypress in marked contrast, with its solid vertical dark spire, to the feathery palm-fronds gleaming against the heavenly blue. Below, you look over the level olive groves, the specialty of Bordighera, just catching, marked out white against the deep green of the sea, the picturesque form of the Hôtel d'Angleterre. Then onward to the forts of Ventimiglia and the quaint promontory of Monaco, and the

far stretching coast beyond, even to the distant jagged outline of the Estrelles.

I stopped you here, because you will not again see the palms thus cutting the far off coast-line. Next time we stop, it will be hidden.

Now thread the arch, and emerge on the steep street which descends westward from the town gate. Take your stand a little above a baker's shop, as nearly as possible opposite the arch, and in the middle of the paved gangway. Thence was taken the sketch at the head of this chapter. Did you ever see a much nobler view ? That mass of ancient palms which you look over to the strip of bright sea and the creamy pink hills in the distance, is in the garden of a Signor M——, known for his propensity to show out very summarily any intruders into his grounds, even if they have acted on former permissions to enter. More of those same grounds by and by. At present, observe the trees. How lovely are their feathery forms, variously lit up with the lavish sunshine! What wealth of colour there is in those shivering glades of delicately ribbed fronds—in those rich yellow and red brown stalks—in that gleaming mass of orange fruitage above the gateway on our left! And where the sunlit mountains form a background for that graceful central palm, how curiously does its head put on peculiar splendour, and mark the aerial distance!

Now let us enter, having made all safe with the padrone by means of some "mutual" friend. Truly, there are palms and palms; and these are of the first order. The ground formerly belonged to some Capuchin monks, who on their coming here, ages ago, are said to have found these trees giants as they are now. High away over us they tower into the sky, loaded with their dazzling fruitage: we pick up and taste the soft sweet dates which strew the ground under them: we vainly try to embrace their ample stems. One spot I noted, where there is an oblong pool with a marble rim, and the stately company of surrounding palms, backed by the dark blue sea-line, is reflected in the glassy water.

Now emerge again: follow the steep street up from the garden—do not enter the gate of the town, but take the path that runs under the walls to the left, upwards, and round towards the back of Bordighera. Notice as you pass, how a gigantic palm has fallen (or grown) prostrate on the wall to the right, and arches over the way, so that you are obliged to stoop to avoid its clubbed knots.

Before long, you come upon a bevy of washerwomen plying their trade

at a pool constructed for them just out of the line of the clear stream which is brought from a distance for the town. Mount up to the back of the pool, under the olives; and you will get the view which we give of Bordighera church amidst a thicket of palms, and the sea behind glittering with the glare of noon.



BORDIGHERA CHURCH.

Advance onward still, by the narrow path between the town gardens and the olive yards. Beside you bubbles the clear runnel in its stony channel. Over you, and around you, and below you, palms, palms: many a group which might occupy a painter a month. Now and then occurs a rift in the continuous wall to the right, down which a runnel is led. Very beautiful are the glimpses down these rifts of the palmy foreground, and the intense blue of the little triangle of sea at the end. It was from the head of one of these that the palm of our frontispiece was taken: the westering sun pouring his flood of gold down the opening, and the shaded side full of the richest and most varied purple.

Before long, the path opens on the side of the ravine which skirts Bordighera to the east, and the rambler descends into the bed of the torrent. Above him are promontories on either side, outlined by the feathery tops of a hundred palms. As he looks up the gorge, the woods seem full of them. But he descends the river bed, and gains the road, that he may reach before evening an often marked and favourite spot.

Immediately below the first "Dazio Communale" of Bordighera, almost two miles from the town, is a group of palms down on the rocky shore, with a path leading among their trunks. Beneath them a low cliff drops to the

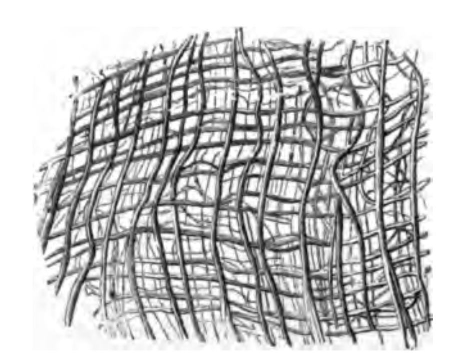


tumbling swell : above, the coast rises rapidly. In the midst of them is what might have been a tomb—an oblong stone-fenced enclosure. It is a dreary spot—such as a morbid man might choose to be buried in. I remember noting it from the carriage on my first visit in 1862 ; and many a time since has that vision of the solitary palm-grove, and the oblong enclosure, and the foamy sea beneath, passed before my waking and sleeping thoughts.

Now let us return ; for sea and coast are fading into gray, and mine host, the active M. Lozeron, will not approve of an appearance put in half-way through his *table-d'hôte.*

But the palm shall still furnish us with thoughts by the way. What is this which hangs in profusion from the lower leaf-boles of the tree—this, which might be coarse canvas left there to dry ? It is the sheath or envelope of the huge prickly frond, "skeletonized," as the botanists call it, by the decay of its pulp, and having left this fibrous ribbage behind. Here it is, accurately photographed for us at Canterbury. But how strangely art-like ! how suggestive of the work of the weaver ! It just occurs to one's mind, while thinking thus, that men must have learned the crossing of threads for the texture of a fabric, in a land where there were palms to teach them.

And so we have had a sort of idyl of palms ; and as we look back on it, and cut the edges of the sketches, and seek to end it congruously, we lie and half dream of a certain procession which wound down the stony path from Olivet, as we might wind down from yonder moonlit village,—and of a joyous multitude who strewed in the way these same graceful, softly-rustling fronds ;—and as sleep falls down with its soft mist, the last thought is of One whose sacrifice was His glory ; and the last words which sound about us are palmy whisperings of distant victory—"To him that overcometh . . . even as I also overcame."



CHAPTER XXIII.

Bordighera to San Remo.

BEFORE leaving Bordighera, I may remark on one advantage which it possesses for invalids over many other resorts on the Riviera. I mean its level space of olive and lemon groves between the beach and the hills. Nowhere else can you get such delightful strolls under the dense shade of the old olives without a fatiguing climb. Wander about by any path that you see among the lavish greenery, fill your hands with great lavender-white periwinkles, and anemones, if it be March—or with orchises and later field flowers, if it be Eastertide—until you come to an old Roman road running parallel to the main route. Either return by a similar path to the hotel, or strike up into the old town to the right, through the steep street before described. Return through the same level shade in the evening, and you are in the midst of a fairy scene, of firefly, and glow-worm, and trilling nightingales. Should Bordighera ever come to the front, as I cannot tell why it should not, as a residence for invalids, surely this level may be made of immense use both for building, and for laying out in walks and drives.

But we are bound eastward. So with last words to our kind host and friends, we make our way through the straight street of the lower village, past the little marina, or landing-place, and so onward by the high road. Or if any prefer a more picturesque way of leaving Bordighera, let him mount to the old town, and leave it by its southern gate, keeping on the high ground as long as roads and paths will let him. And here it is time to mention, that the best guide to Bordighera and its neighbourhood is Ruffini's capital story, 'Dr. Antonio.' Presuming my readers to be acquainted with that story, I have inserted a vignette of the scene of the "upset" in the first chapter. Where exactly the "osteria" is meant to have been, is difficult to say. The rest of the description is so very accurate, that we may well presume this part to be accurate also, and yet there is no spot which seems exactly to correspond. The very bit of ground where the carriage was overturned (at



H. A. del.

SCENE OF THE UPSET IN 'DR. ANTONIO.'

the foot of the promontory in the middle distance) has been now rather broken up by the works of the new railway, but it remains sufficiently distinct for identification.

The road from Bordighera to San Remo hardly equals in interest that which we have left behind us, nor is San Remo itself in any sense an attractive position. The old town is indeed one of the quaintest on the Riviera, as seen from the pier below; the mountain of old houses, stained and weather-beaten, with their arched loggias and terraces, is quite unique. And when we enter the streets the scene is as curious. Here we first see in plenty those bands of masonry, uniting house to house, which abound henceforward through the towns on our route, built as safeguards, we are told, against the shaking of earthquakes. But what is all this to the invalid? There is absolutely no scenery at San Remo, unless it be sought by distant excursions. Flowers there are in abundance, but they must be climbed for among the steep terraces behind the town. There is not even

a level walk commanding a view, as at Bordighera, Mentone, Nice, and Cannes. The prospect is shut hopelessly in by the two promontories, Capo Nero on the west, and Capo Verde on the east. There is a picturesque old church, the Madonna della Guardia, on the latter promontory; but that is almost the only object San Remo has to boast.

Of the "Grand Hôtel d'Angleterre" there I may have something to say, when I treat of that department of my subject. If San Remo be an excellent place for our English invalids, so far well: but other advantages it certainly has not, compared with its beautiful rivals along this exquisite coast.

As we united to the last stage of the journey the excursion to Dolce Acqua, it is fair to balance this much less interesting one by that to Taggia and the Madonna di Lampedusa. A few miles eastward from San Remo the road to Taggia strikes off to the left through olive woods, and after skirting the torrent Argentina for a mile or two, enters the town. I shall not venture on a description, after the minute account of this very expedition in 'Dr. Antonio.' There is one point, however, on the paved hill-road from Taggia to the sanctuary of the Madonna di Lampedusa, of which we cannot help quoting a description. It is from a story not so well known as 'Dr. Antonio,' where the scene of some of the incidents is laid on the Riviera. The authors of 'Netherton on Sea' have kindly given me permission to make use of this and the word-picture of the harbour of Villafranca, cited in a preceding chapter. I may say that I especially noted this point of the road on my visit in 1868, and had no difficulty in recognising it in the pleasant story published, I believe, last year.

"They were sitting on a rocky projecting point in the midst of a series of terraces, rising out of the bed of a torrent far beneath. The terraces were formed by yellowish-brown stone walls, and served for the rooting-ground of numberless olive-trees, the opposite and neighbouring hills being similarly disposed. The peculiar green thus spread over the upper parts of the slopes gave place to a silvery gray as the eye ranged downwards, which again became bright misty blue in the depths of the valleys. Looking to the right and northward, two or three distant folds-over of lower mountains melted into tenderer and tenderer purple, till at the further point, a single snow-flecked summit peered over into the vale. To the left and southward the opposite hill sank down into a promontory, with its feet in the sea. The pearly haze divested that sea of its ordinary

depth of colour, and left it in lines of paler and paler blue, losing its horizon in the brooding mist. To complete the far-off picture, five or six glittering campanili, some with, some without, attendant villages, were perched on heights, basking in the haze. But the near objects must not be forgotten. Close at their feet passed downward the paved path by which they had ascended, divided into steps by narrow curbstones. On its left dropped down a tiny dark ravine, full of verdure, from the depth of which came the trickle of a slender stream, broken at intervals by the rich gushing notes of a nightingale hidden in its shrubs. The head of this little ravine overhung the path itself, and consisted of a curved basin or circus of tufa rock, moist with dripping water, and draped with a perfect carpet of the graceful maiden-hair fern. In the point of this natural arc had been placed a stone basin, into which ran, from a piece of hollow cane, a bright little stream of purest water. To follow out our description into plants and flowers would be endless, and yet it were hardly a living one without some mention of them. The terrace-walls were rich with the dusty pink bunches of wild thyme, and the bright-blue of the borage, not to mention a perfect glory of golden sultan and cytisus, deepened here and there on a terrace where culture had been too easy, with a band of the crimson poppy. For some way down, the bank of the little rillet in the gully gleamed with a clear dark-blue, due to a profusion of the blossoms of the lovely lithospermum (gromwell.)"



LA MADONNA DI LAMPEDUSA.



ROCK CHAPEL AT ARMI.

H. A. del.

CHAPTER XXIV.

San Remo to Oneglia.

THE subject of the present chapter is not among the most interesting of the Riviera stages, although it is hardly possible to conceive any more characteristic of the south. The road lies chiefly along the shore itself, now and then mounting the promontories which intervene between bay and bay.

When we have passed under the Madonna della Guardia, the first object worthy of notice is the village of Armi, with its curious rock chapel in a cave overhanging the sea. The vetturino will stop at the end of the excavated road above the village, and it is quite worth while to visit this curious feature of the local worship.

A little beyond Armi, the road crosses the Taggia torrent (Argentina) at its mouth, and a sight is gained of Taggia itself, embosomed in olive-woods on the left-hand side of the valley, and of the Madonna di Lampe-

dusa high on the ridge to the right. Villages stretched along the level sands now become the order of the day, and with very much the same kind of coast scenery we thread the curious old streets of San Stefano-al-Mare, and San Lorenzo, the latter conspicuous far on either side by its tall campanile, gracefully terminating the slope of its promontory.

Some time after we have ceased to look back at San Lorenzo, we come in sight of the striking hill-built houses and towers and domes of Porto Maurizio, backed by the eastward-bounding promontory of these prospects, Capo della Mele. This fine headland may be considered as the end of the second portion of the western Riviera, the first having terminated with Nice. It is the last point visible from Genoa, looking westward, as it is from this side looking eastward.



PORTO MAURIZIO FROM THE W.

We mount into and over the steep streets of the town, halt for a bait at a wayside locanda at the further foot of its hill, and pursue our way to Oneglia. Look to the left up the valley, as you pass under the glaring white marble arches of the suspension bridge. Those splendid peaks, which unfold so temptingly, glade after glade, look over the mountain road to Turin, which we mean to describe in our next chapter.

Before we have taken our fill of the beauty of this exquisite view, we are rattling into the echoing arcaded streets of Oneglia. Very singular are these stately modern arcades of the Rue de Rivoli order, but probably a century older. Glaring white, again, in their dress of plaister, as the piles of the bridge were in their costlier material. There seems to have

been a rage for these tall Palladian arcades at one time on this coast. We have them at Nice in the Place Massena, and the Place Napoleon, and several towns break out into fragmentary attempts at their dreary splendour. The idea was, I suppose, to improve on the low arched "rows" at Genoa and Chiavari. Certainly, in point of comfort, this has been done, though not in point of picturesqueness.



ONEGLIA.

CHAPTER XXV.

From Oneglia to Turin (parenthetical).

IN 1868, I was prevented from visiting the Riviera at my usual time, and thrown into the late spring. For some reasons which will shortly appear, this was a change for the better; but all the elasticity and bracing power of the air seemed gone, and at Mentone my companion and I were laid up with feverish depression. We had intended to work on towards Genoa, but this thwarted our purpose. We seemed to have no heart to go on. At last, after two wasted days of bed and sofa, we sought out a vetturino in utter despair, willing to entrust ourselves to him to be taken anywhere out of the wearying sirocco which was beating and loading the air. He proved an intelligent adviser, and at once suggested a run across the mountains from Oneglia by Mondovi to Turin, joining the Col di Tenda Railway at Fossano.

So the next morning we committed ourselves to his guidance, and started in a comfortable well-appointed carriage for Oneglia. We had bargained to be taken up to Dolce Acqua on the first day, sleeping at Bordighera, and to Taggia and the Madonna di Lampedusa on the second, reaching Oneglia in the evening.

Of these intermediate places I have already treated. At present, my object is to describe the pass from Oneglia over the Maritime Alps.

The road leaves the somewhat stately arcaded piazza at Oneglia, striking up along the left bank of the Impēro torrent, under olive terraces bright with an undergrowth of poppies. We pass the hamlet of Castel Vecchio. Opposite us are Borgo d'Oneglia, and other small villages on the olive-crowned hills. Ere long, the snow-streaked mountains come into view, and the glittering town of Touri just under them. It is a clear bright morning; every blade sparkles with dew: we seem as if we had escaped from stagnation into life. Winding by many olive-clothed hills, we pass the torrent at Ponte d'Assio, with Lestagno on a hill at our right. The stone escarpments which form our banks are of shaly slate, a feature to which we have not of late been accustomed. A few old villas are scattered about on the heights.

As we survey the banks of the road, we note a perfect wealth of way-side flowers, which former earlier visits had not revealed to us. All our English weeds seem to abound, magnified in size, and, from their exuberant foliage, forming beautiful objects when we should little have expected it. The mullein spreads its large flannel leaves, and glories in a spike of blossoms nearly as large as primroses. The prickly-leaved borage strews beneath its masses of heavenly blue. The glaucous valerian puts on a deeper crimson than ever with us at Canterbury, where it clothes our ancient ruins. Convolvuli, unknown to us, wind round every stem, hung with their great morning bells of pale, bright, and dark red. A little pendulous silene, of a lovely faint rose-colour, droops over the edges of the banks, alternating with the thyme, which makes with its dusty leaves a mist of reddish gray. Further up, the euphorbia glares with its masses of lemon yellow, which are carried on among the wilderness of green by a grand sulphurous antirrhinum with its graceful spikes. In moist spots where runnels come down, little paradises of maiden-hair fern, just getting clothed with its tender green fronds. At one such place, my companion picked a small lily-like white flower of exquisite beauty.

Our list is not yet exhausted. We must add to it pink gladioli; coronilla and cytisus of all growths and sizes; gigantic blue and pink poly-gala, lithospermum (gromwell) most luxuriant, attracting the eye at once by its unusual deep bright blue; cistus, creeping and shrubby, white, yellow, and rosy pink. And there we must stop for fear of wearying the reader, promising him another such catalogue when we have ascended to the mountain growths.

Still, as we advance, numerous bright villages are perched on the olive-clad heights, interesting in their lavish variety. At thirteen kilomètres from Oneglia the beautiful outline of Monte Grande rises on the left. A sudden turn in the road now brings in view our destined ascent, climbing through olive and fir woods up to and over the bare hills.

As we mount, pastures, unknown to the Riviera, begin to appear. Our driver enlivens the slow progress by wonderful stories about a bridge at Albenga, built by Cæsare Augusto when he came to fight with Hannibal (!) Verdure gradually increases, and the familiar English oak hangs its young yellow-green over the road. As we approach the summit of our present ascent, we lose all this, and the way becomes barer, but the olives are covered with rich black fruit, which they were not lower down.

At last, after winding much through dreary uplands, and villages which the very fact of human habitations rendered more dreary, we look back on the sea, and down on Touri and Oneglia in the distance. Then we pass a white house which marks the first summit (for there are summits and summits), and we bid adieu to the Mediterranean for the present, at the Colla di San Bartolomeo.

On the other side a grand view, down—down—down, blocked by snowy Alps, now in that state of semi-clearness which makes them more glittering and glorious. We descend, of course rapidly, through forests of chestnut-trees, further out in leaf than we had seen any on the southern slope. About 600 feet down by my aneroid, olives begin again. By and by we see the Albenga road down a valley by a torrent (La Rossia) on the right, with a grand peak at its end. After awhile we join this road, and run into Pieve, where we call our mid-day halt. A quaint old place among the hills,—one long street, with dark arcades, under which every imaginable trade is plied. Among others, the culinary art is not ill understood, for we get an excellent lunch.

At three we set out up a long ascent, with a mule in front to help. Still through chestnut forests. After reaching 3100 feet above the sea, we begin to descend, as it proves, finally. We cast a look back, but the sea and the Riviera are blocked by the Colla di San Bartolomeo, and its little speck of a white house.



GORGE OF THE TANARO.

So we are fairly over, and dismissing our mule we rattle down through Alpine pastures, blue with gentian on either side, into a grand rocky ravine, where we join the course of the Tanaro.

I should have before this stated that the wayside growths had

altogether changed in mounting through the chestnut forests. Instead of underwood of myrtle and sarsaparilla, wild olive and cytisus, we had the wild rose and bramble; the common English bugle was very large and deep blue; the wild strawberry showed its starry blossoms, and occasionally a tempting crimson berry amidst an arbour of green; yellow sultan and dandelion and nettle, filled up that department of colour, and orchids of several species; the mascula, the epipactis of a magnificent size, and others, were seen rising amidst the luxuriant herbage, while the primrose and dog-violet recalled our forest glades in east Kent.

The ravine becomes grander and grander after the two branches of the Tanaro have met. Immense slate rocks tower over us, gray and red, lit up with the now declining sun. Soon the chestnut forests begin again, but the valley is more soft and riant than any on the southern side. Every turn brings fresh grandeur of forest, rock, and masses of snowy mountains. Some of the trunks of the aged chestnuts are splendidly gnarled and twisted, like the pillars of the gate Beautiful. The driver tells us that the pass is called the Col di Nava. The sketch at the end of this chapter is taken at the point where the cliffs on the right are at the grandest.



TORRE DEI SARACENI.

We come to Ormeo, under the snow-streaked summit, with a ruined castle, and a torrent spanned by a picturesque bridge, coming down from a side ravine. After this the valley widens somewhat, and strips of meadow land and fruit orchards fill it in for about two miles. The rock walls, and their colours on the right, are as fine as any I remember ever to have seen. The bases are all clothed with chestnut forests.

Then we enter another magnificent gorge, guarded by the Torre dei Saraceni. After this the rocks continue of the same character, but the course of the Tanaro begins to be marked by willows and fruit trees in bloom. Then came some wonderful gray-blue crags, with an undergrowth of shrubby box, giving out now in the evening its peculiar aromatic smell. Alders then fringe the stream, vocal with the loud song of many nightingales. Just as the valley widens out, we come upon Garessio, where we get comfortable quarters and entertainment.

Next morning we find the valley still spreading down towards the plain, and the road flat, in long straight reaches. The hills, of course, are less interesting, but still rich with chestnut forests and undergrowth of box. Many ruined castles perched on the heights. The villages are most ruinous and wretched. At a short distance from Garessio we cross the Tanaro on a marble bridge, and soon after the road rises over a small hill, and skirts the side of a gorge, the river pent between rocks beneath, and at the end the distant snowy Alps of the main range near Mont Cenis.


H. A. del.

As we advance past Cevi the Alps become most glorious. Monte Viso, the chief of them, "looks from his high dominion like the god of this new world." This character is more and more striking as we descend further, and the bases and country below are hidden in mist. Then the top of Monte Viso gleams up in the sky faint and mysterious, like an approaching strange planet.

The road is principally over plains, more or less inclined to the north-west or south-west, with rather bare hills on the right, speckled with villages. On entering the street of Lo Segno, the whole range of the Maritime Alps bursts into view on the left. After a long level stretch we pass San Michele, prettily situated in a rocky ravine, with a torrent

(the Osolia) rushing down it, the mills and cottages full of subjects for sketching, and a grand ruin of a Saracenic castle towering over.

The road keeps rising for several miles till it threads a tunnel. The prominent object on emerging is a great ugly modern church, the Madonna di Vico, about which our vetturino has been in ecstasies all day. Its background of snowy mountains is magnificent. To please our friend we dismount and enter. The same unrelieved glare of white and gray marble inside as out. This seems the favourite character of pretentious modern buildings in the south. Half a mile further down we come to Mondovi, a small city on the banks of a torrent, with several churches, picturesquely situated.

Here our vetturino had planned for us to pass the night. In his quaint English version of our agreement, "sleep to Mondovi" was one clause. But it was only 3 P.M. Fossano, our point of junction with the railway, was but three hours off, and there was a train to Turin at 6.23. Our horses showed no sign of fatigue, and we were not disposed to miss the chance of saving a day. So with a hint that the *buona mano* would depend on our reaching Fossano in time for the train, we are off again after a very short bait.

The road invites no record until we see the towers and roofs of Fossano, now delightfully near. The time is 6.5, and Giuseppe has pointed out to us the very roof of La Ferrovia, as he calls the station. Suddenly a thought strikes us, suggested by the marked difference in size of the trees near, and those next to them in distance. What if Fossano should take its name from a fosse, and there should be a ravine between us and the town? A few more yards, and lo! even so it was. A rapid descent into a deep bottom, and the opposite side showing a series of weary zigzags. By profuse exhortation, and a promised increase of *buona mano*, we succeed, much to Giuseppe's credit, in reaching the Ferrovia at 6.25, two minutes after the time. But the train is still standing, as foreign trains do, and by an immense exhibition of excitement my companion succeeds in penetrating to the platform with the bags, I being left to arrange the *buona mano*, and get the tickets. Fortunately all prospered. Giuseppe departs loading us with benedictions; the booking clerk laughs merrily, as he hands me the tickets; the station-master conducts us to our carriage with the politest of bows, and we are safe for Turin.

But before the train started we had time to enjoy and to note down

the most glorious sunset over the town and mountains. First, came a foreground of vineyards and fig-trees, lavish in their early green, but flooded with the level beams of rosy light. Then the roofs and churches of the town, dark purple in richest shadow. Then the grand bank of mountains, of the loveliest light-blue, rising southwards till it culminates in Monte Viso rising high above all. And behind these the sky, deep crimson below, clearing into loveliest cadmium upwards, and that fading by the gentlest gradations into delicate blue. The sun, pausing on the ridge, gives every peak on its averted side half a coronet of rays, the effect of the jagged shadows of its northward outline. At last, as we move off, his last sparklet drops behind the now faded blue of the ridge, and Monte Viso remains glowing with his presence long after the rest are dark.

I deal not with towns, so say nothing of Turin. But let no one who visits it, and has not time to go out to the Superga, fail to drive over the bridge to the Capuccini. The view, as from the Superga, embraces the whole main range of the Alps. The city lies mapped out beneath; the plains of Piedmont stretch away into the purple haze; over them rise the great snowy barriers. All the giants are plainly seen; westward Monte Viso; then, as the eye travels along by the Mont Cenis pass, Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, even to the far distant Ortler Spitz over the Stelvio pass.



ON THE TANARO.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Oneglia to Alassio.

WE now resume the main Riviera road, looking back, as in our vignette (p. 82), on Oneglia and Porto Maurizio, glowing in the morning sun with colours such as none but southern travellers can imagine.

But the day, as usual this spring of 1869, is an uncertain one. Great clouds are careering about with a wild unpromising look; and as we turn the first corner up the rise from our inn, down comes the wind on one, bringing not only dust in blinding volumes, but pebbles also, into one's eyes. And before long, alas! drifting rain, with a chill feel as if there might be snow amongst the drops.

This we bear as we may for a few miles of coast scenery, ordinary enough in the Riviera, but capable of making the fortune of any bit of sea-board in England. At last we look out and see the sea resuming its colours, one of the first signs of the weather improving; and the clouds also are beginning to fall into lines and tender curves, and spaces of blue to appear.

The road is full of interest. As we rose the first hill, there was a picturesque graveyard, in a deep gorge, with an octagon chapel in it, and commanding a glorious view of Porto Maurizio and Oneglia. Had not the first keen stings of the driven rain been smarting on my cheeks, I should have stopped my vetturino and secured, at all events, a vignette for these pages.

And now that the light is come out again, the drive, though it is cold and still threatening, is full of enjoyment. We traverse, one after another, land-locked bays, bright in colour, with the tumult of foam lashing without. On emerging from each, we turn the promontories, and meet the angry cuffs of the wind. How glorious on such a day is the expanse of sea which opens from every such specular headland! Restless trouble prevails far and near. But the colours are worth noting, for they are constant, all the night and the day, and wonderfully lovely. Near the shore we have various shades and bands of green, flecked of course with the leaping of the innumerable snow-white breakers; in the middle distance a field of pink and purple the foaming waves tumbling like stars from its bosom; in the

distance purest, deepest blue; all ultramarine, no indigo, as in our British seas, except off west Cornwall and Scilly.

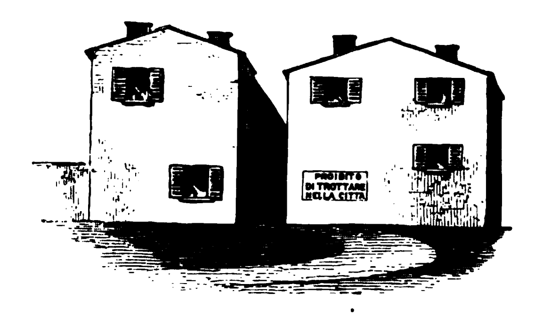
Our first village is Diano Marina, a long strand of houses facing the sea, and only diverting our thoughts from Nature by the glare of the bright houses, and the shouting of urchins, and the barking of dogs.

Cervo (or vi) is worthy of more notice, and may serve as a specimen of the hill-built Riviera towns hereabouts; we therefore give it a vignette.



CERVI.

The entering these towns is strange enough. You wonder where the road is going among the houses; you see no inlet in the line of gables—where is its course? It passes into yonder archway, that looks as if it carried the town sewer, and through a street of which a hand might touch



both sides. Into this, in spite of the PROIBITO DI TROTTARE NELLA CITTA, always conspicuously painted up, your vetturino dashes full speed, amidst the barking of dogs, the screams of flying children, and execrations of the women, who stand at the doors. Once, and once only, in all my Riviera journeys, have I been stopped in this random defiance of

regulations; this was at Alassio, by a sort of policeman, who manfully bestrode the road, and, causing the driver to bring his horses down on their haunches, demanded his name and that of his employer. The man walked his horses for nearly a mile beyond the town, and kept looking behind him; but he did not seem to apprehend any ulterior consequences.

We now came to one of those swampy valleys, which share with bold headlands this portion of the coast. This particular one has a curious story attaching to it, of a murder in a castle, which we see in ruins on the left; but I could gain nothing in confirmation of it from my vetturino: only a long narrative of a fatal accident to some English lord, whose name I forget.

At length we turn the Capo della Mele, and the lovely bay of Alassio opens on us. As compared with the less interesting character of the coast since we passed Oneglia, the country seems to have again recovered the beauty which we had left behind. Huge hills covered with olive are banked up behind the town; and dotted about upon them, in all the most favoured spots, are campanili, and villages with campanili. The carouba again appears on the steeps which impend over the road, and for the first time since we left Mentone, oranges in profusion are hanging ripe on the trees. We wonder, as we dash along the prohibited pavement, that this has never been praised up as a spot of shelter for English invalids. The bay is well enclosed between the two headlands, Capo della Mele and Capo Santa Croce. It is true, Alassio has a partially eastern exposure; but so has Mentone, and San Remo even more: and as at those places, so at Alassio, there are abundance of sheltered nooks where villas might be perched down secure from every chilling blast.

I have already, in a former work, attempted a description of the entrance to Alassio, and of the curious old inn there.

"We found it convenient to divide our journey from Mentone to Genoa at a strange old sea-side town called Alassio. An English reader, who has not been out of his own country, or has seen only French, German, or Swiss towns, can hardly form an idea of these coast towns of North Italy. From the broad, straight road across the marsh, and the gravelly dry bed of the torrent, you suddenly enter the street through a dark gate, armed with a disregarded notice that "carriages must not enter the town, but drive round." Your carriage bowls almost noiselessly along the flat paving-stones, with which the street is covered, the driver dispersing the passers-by with sonorous cracks of his whip, and howls perfectly inimitable by an

English larynx. The long perspective of the straight narrow street is broken above by numerous bands of masonry uniting the houses, intended, I believe, to steady them in case of earthquake. The effects of these arches, thrown irregularly over the way, is strange and picturesque, especially when, as in the old city of San Remo, the streets wind up a steep acclivity.



"Suddenly your carriage stops before what you suppose, from indications both of sight and sense, to be the vault of some vast stable. But it is your inn; and, not improbably, a most respectable and comfortable one. After some clamouring and patience, mine host, or his deputy, appears, vainly endeavouring to persuade his damp matches to light the candle which is to show you up to the first habitable floor. This proves generally to be the *second*, the ground level being all stable and coach-house; the first floor—kitchen, and tap-room, and house of the family. The staircase is always of stone; in the larger towns, of marble; and, whether stone or marble, not washed since the French general slept there on his way to the campaign of Italy, and probably not then. Arrived at the second landing, and having waited some time for the discovery of the key, you find yourself in large, airy, and generally clean rooms, now usually carpeted and furnished (blessings on their inventor!) always, in Italy, with iron bedsteads.

"An agreeable surprise awaited us at Alassio. The 'Grand Hôtel d' Italie, tenu par Agostino Pungibovi' (now, 1869, far more appropriately, the Albergo della bella Italia) had been an ancient palace. Our host threw open the doors of a suite of rooms, rich with massive carving, and bearing gilded panels; and we gathered round our tea-table in a chamber which might have been the boudoir of a princess. But alas for its departed glories! our servant told us next morning, that he saw the waiter trying to grind our coffee by crushing it with an old bottle!" *

* 'Letters from Abroad.' 2nd Ed. 1865.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Alassio to Albenga.

THE scenery of the sheltered bay of Alassio continues for some way after leaving the town ; but, on rounding the headland of Santa Croce, we again enter on the succession of bleak ascents and descents, and road uninteresting but for the never-tiring glories of the sea. As we advance, however, another noticeable feature opens and gains upon us. If our day were clear, the eye might perceive, from San Remo onwards, a faint but gradually rising line of very distant mountains on the eastern horizon. This is the opposite coast of Italy, which now begins to present itself plainly and unmistakeably. I will set down here a few jottings concerning the view of this coast, which the reader will have no difficulty in following with the map. They were made on my *return from Genoa to Nice* in the spring of 1869.

*   *   *   *   *

Beyond Cogoleto. The whole of the Eastern Riviera distinctly visible. That grand mass marking the nearer portion is the mountain between Rapallo and Porto Fino: that snow-covered range behind, the distant Appennines. As the coast stretches away down to Spezia, the Carrara mountains are plainly visible in the background.

*   *   *   *   *

The opposite coast exceedingly clear *from near Vado* (beyond Savona). It has now opened out considerably below Spezia, and even beyond the last vanishing line of coast, very distant mountains are visible.

*   *   *   *   *

Beyond Loano, almost at Albenga. The Carrara mountains still ; and one, far below them, southward, immense in size and entirely white. The whole range of the Appennines from Genoa to Siena is now visible.

*   *   *   *   *

At sunset, beyond Albenga. Still the whole range of the snowy Appennines very, very far south—a ship in sail between us and them burns like a lamp in the glow.

*   *   *   *   *

The distant mountains are now losing the sun, and loom ghost-like in the horizon, Now the last vestiges of their forms are fading away.

* * * * *

Next day, past Alassio. The long line of Appennines still visible, perfectly clear to their summits.

* * * * *

Between Andora and Cervo. The Appennines as clear as ever;—Porto Fino, and far below Spezia.

* * * * *

Rising from Diano Marina. View magnificent. Seven mountain villages glittering in the woods of olive—and the long range of the Appennines still slanting down to Spezia—I should fancy, visible for the last time, as the coast now trends away north-westward.

* * * * *

Near San Lorenzo. Appennines still visible, but very faint.

* * * * *

From under the Madonna della Guardia, by San Remo, the Appennines still most faintly visible.

* * * * *

I have taken the reader both onward and backward, to give a complete account of this glorious element in the Riviera journey. I will finish it by adding, that as Genoa is approached, the distant features of the view vanish, and the look-out is bounded by the Porto Fino mountain to the E., as it is to the W. by the curious rectangular headland at Finale, overtopped by the more distant Capo della Mele.

As we seem to have entered on a fragmentary chapter, I will take up a phrase dropped just now, and insert something from my passing notes on the "never-tiring glories of the sea." These notes were chiefly made on the ground occupied by the present chapter.

* * * * *

Magnificent morning. Sea perfectly calm—glittering in the sun, with long lines of shadow cast by the rising ripples. This ground swell on the calm is very beautiful. Look some little way out to sea, and you see nothing but infinite and infinitesimal ripples; but there are gradually gathering onwards continually darkening ridges, passing forward *under the ripples* towards the shore. These are of another birth from the surface

ripplings, and are bound on a different errand. Watch them. As they approach slowly, they begin to assume shape, and to gain depth of colour: here and there a slight feather of foam breaks, and blows off the top, while the whole has by this time gathered into a grand wave, level and proud, curling over, smooth as glass, and deep in emerald and shadow.

Hush! look, while it lasts, at that loveliest of exquisite tints of transparent green, when the sun is caught through the lifted mass of water. But now its time has come; and first in a little frisk here and there, then in a series of snowy tongues or triangles, bursts the foam.

In the instant before it falls, notice the reflection of that form in the glassy valley beneath—then, as it rushes onward, mark how perfectly separate it keeps from the said glassy surface,—being still rendered from it with the most perfect delicacy of light and shadow.

But while we look, the whole ridge of green water has plunged over, and all is a boiling mass of froth, leaping, dashing, forcing its way onward: sliding over the grateful sand, and seething up the reluctant shingle.

* * * * *

Hardly anything is more beautiful, than an evening sea, with a slight ripple, and the low sunlight over it. The colour is a calm resty blue, with a gentle motion, like breathing; and the lines of shadow cast by the ripples take the most wonderful prismatic colours,—variously, or alternately, giving the two complementary tints, or the neutral, compounded of both. I seem to have observed, that this is different under the morning sun. Then the rising waves show uniformly dark against the sun, but not rich in colour, nor even in depth of blue.



H. A. del.

After these digressions, we resume our route. We have brought in sight a new feature—an island. Not however from this side picturesque,

but lumpy in shape, something resembling, in all but height, the steep Holms in our own Bristol Channel. The name, Gallinaria, speaks of fowls, which Murray tells us at one time overran the island, and are mentioned by as early writers as Varro and Columella.

The accompanying plan-sketch will show the points. The island Gallinaria explains itself. Behind the first headland lies the wide valley of Albenga. The next, dark and angular, is the promontory of Finale; beyond it, the small dark headland is Varigotta. The snowy mountains seen over, are the Genoese Alps; and the distant line beyond them is that of the far-off Apennines.



H. A. del.

Now we have rounded the corner, and Albenga bursts upon us. Wonderful old city, with its crown of thirteen great massive towers and its cincture of quaint mediæval walls. Anything so out of the common in this very mannerizing district is a relief to the eye—and in spite of most unpromising quarters at the Albergo d'Italia, I determined to pass the night here, and get some sketching.

First I retraced my steps about half a mile, to the hill where the town first burst on me: and climbing up a rocky path, saw beneath me the diadem of towers, burning in the evening sun. At my feet, the inexorable line of shadow was creeping on, to swallow up all the brilliance long before I could get it on my paper; and had already reached the city walls and towers, when I began to colour. Beyond, the view was very glorious. The long tongue of water, running sharp in to the mountains opposite, was of the most exquisite light blue. Those mountains themselves were glowing with various tints of red, and rich brown, and purple; and the headlands far, far away, faded off into more and more delicate blue.

Beyond all, the sky, lemon-yellow next the light blue water, flushed through rose and purple into the same pale azure as the sea. Between the town and the mountains, spread the rich valley, with its various green tipped with the gilding of the sunset.

But the clinging damp admonishes me to effect a swift retreat, and I reach the little brick-floored salon, with bedroom doors round it, but ill-warmed even by the half mile's run. Dinner, and a fire, are one's present wants. The former is soon put in command; but the latter takes half-an-hour's kneeling, and blowing at damp olive roots, as every one knows who has tried the same. At last, success after many failures,—and the crackling flames are fairly set going. I retire to efface the traces of my housemaid's work before dinner. After a few moments, steps, and voices; I hear the word "*Ah! voila un joli feu!*" and emerge, to behold six French ladies in hemi-cycle round my hardly-earned fire. And so passed the evening, much to their comfort, and my satisfaction as regarded them; and to the establishing a most agreeable acquaintance with the whole family, from the aged grandmère, down to the sprightly lass who made the tea. At last, the mamma, late on in the evening, exclaimed—"*Pardon! peut-être Monsieur a froid.*" A hearty laugh greeted the discovery, and the "*sic vos non vobis*" was politely put an end to. We met afterwards in the railway,—and good estimable people they proved. It is one of the delights of travel, to gather good and kindness from these casual acquaintances, name and station unknown, all private interests and subjects laid aside; to converse on the common ground of humanity and country, and—shall I add? to part without the remotest thought of ever meeting again—for even that must be one form of unselfishness.

During the night, rolling, leaping, crackling thunder; lightning, suddenly revealing and withdrawing the little chamber; rain, or hail, or whatever it was, roaring and splashing outside. At the first look out, every hill, and half the level, white with new-fallen snow, and the thermometer at the window at 40°.

But the morning, though bitterly cold, is bright and clear; and I wake up, and get in one of the old towers with its deep machicolations, lit by the eastern sun.

The interior of the city is full of interest. There is a curious square, the Piazza dei Leoni, with ancient figures of lions at the foot of a tall

tower: and the W. front of the Cathedral is carved with plentiful quaint devices, knots and spirals, and the like. An architectural draughtsman would find a week's employment here. The photograph-vignette which terminates this chapter, shows four of the old towers.

A little way out of Albenga, is a Roman bridge, now standing beside the road; of massive construction, and of considerable length; the first Roman work which I had seen since the shapeless mass of the Tropæa Augusti (Turbia), on the road above Monaco.

The storm above-mentioned broke up my weather in the spring of last year, and rendered the rest of the journey almost futile, as far as description by pencil and pen were concerned. Though I pursued my purpose through Genoa, and down to Chiavari, leaden skies, or dropping showers were henceforth my constant enemies. Two fine days only were interposed. The work of one of them will appear further on. But it became obvious, that if the latter half of the Western Riviera journey were to be treated, another journey must be undertaken.

Here, therefore, my first part, and the contribution from my journey of March 1869, come to an end.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

Albenga to Loano.

I RESUME my broken journey under very different auspices. But the difference is not so great as it might have been in countries further North. Any thing like the desolation of England before the outbreak of summer, is never seen on the Riviera. The climate is by nature genial; and dreary weather is an interruption and an exception. A fine warm day in January is as complete summer out here, barring the foliage and fruit, as a fine cool day in June. Some notable differences of course there are; that just hinted at being among the chief. The lovely pergolas, or vine-bowers, dappled with shade, and hung with the richest bunches—the enormous gourds trailing over roof and wall—the perfect heaven of flowers beaming from every garden; the white glare that turns to darkness the moment the eye looks on book or drawing-paper; the dust, hereafter to be described; the half-naked forms of the bronzed workmen along the way, and shoals of cupids splashing in the surf, or scampering about every sandy beach; the unwelcome energies of insect life in wasp, mosquito, and other imaginable species; all these sufficiently proclaim it August, as the well-known and unaltered forms of mountain and rock once more reveal themselves.

There is nothing calling for special notice for some miles after Albenga. The road is the chord of the great arc formed by the retiring hills, and is carried across the alluvial plain. The before-mentioned ancient massive stone bridge, curiously spanning a dry piece of meadow-land, hardly to be called picturesque, seems to justify its repute of Roman origin (see p. 84). At Ceriale, we come again on the sea; the hills have approached the shore; and the well-known features of the coast road again greet us.

Loano is one of the most noteworthy spots in this part of the Riviera. The mountains which form its background are graceful in shape, and of a peculiarly delicate tint; and three great piles of building nestle under them in the middle distance; the Castello Doria, the convent





CARMELITE CHURCH, LOANO.

and church of S. Agostino, and the Monte Carmello—a church founded in honour of the Virgin of Mount Carmel, by the lords of the neighbouring Castello. The former of these is seen in our coloured view, perched on its embattled rock. It is quite worth any traveller's while who may be detained for a bait, to follow the torrent upwards from the bridge as he enters the town from Genoa, and ascending about half a mile, to mount the terrace of the Carmelite church. The view is one which he will not easily forget. To his left, across a deep blue bay, is a dark bluff, with the bright houses of a village seen under it: following along the coast, he can just make out the entrance to the Finale tunnel,—the headland, usually so conspicuous, being from this point blended with the other horn of the Bay of Finale. Then at the apex of the curve lies Pietra, glaring in the sun; and Finale Borgo on the hill beyond, seeming from here united with Pietra. To the right, past a plain of vines and orange-trees, is Loano, certainly more stately from here than on nearer acquaintance. Seen over the town, is the island of Gallinaria, faint blue on the sea-line: and beyond it, the Capo della Mele. Then rise, as the eye travels nearer, the fine mountains bounding the bay of Albenga, and hiding the "hundred-towered" city from our view. The hither horn of the bay leads landward to a range which embraces the valley-plain and Loano.

On the immediate right, between us and the Castello Doria, is a ravine, wonderful for dense fertility. At the time when I am writing,

the peaches, and figs, and grapes are conspicuous on the trees, and as the eye ranges upwards, the glen is lost in a fold of olive-clad hills, topped by the creamy pink mountains beyond.

The climb of the far higher Castello Doria hardly repays the trouble —unless, indeed, the traveller have not before seen a narrow-streeted many-arched hill village. The view is much the same as that just described, and wants the leading feature of the castle itself.

Let the traveller accept another bit of advice, and not sleep at Loano. The food is good, and the wine of the country capital; but there is another side to the matter, and I wish to prevent others from repeating my experience. So now we bid adieu to our most courteous host of the Albergo dell' Europa, and fare forward, giving a good two hours to our drawing in the deep shade beneath an arch of the bridge before-mentioned.

While we are thus employed, a little episode occurs, which, as it led to inquiry with result, may as well be recorded.

Of course, every sketcher makes up his mind to the inevitable group of idlers, which, like flies, settle down on him the moment he is discovered; and every sketcher is happier if he knows, that the sooner he makes friends of this group, the better it is for him. I have again and again, by enlisting the interest of the first comers, gained immunity from all annoyance, and pleasantly beguiled the time. In this case, my first interlocutor is a fine swarthy boy of eleven or twelve, arrayed in the not unfrequent solitary integument of boy-life in the Riviera, the tattered trousers, innocent of shirt and braces, covering but a few inches of him, and threatening every moment to desert that scanty duty.

"Was he fond of drawing?"

"Oh yes; very fond;" he wished he could be a painter.

"Why couldn't he?"

"Cost money."

But—"didn't he go to school?"

"No,—never."

Here we were joined by half-a-dozen more, boys and girls, younger and older, in rather more conventional costume.

"Don't they go to school either?"

"No; one did, but not the rest."

Hereupon, when I went my way, I pondered: and as opportunity offered, I imparted my pondering to such Italian fellow-travellers as

CHAPTER XXIX.

Loano to Finale.

WE of the west of England think ourselves abundantly provided with dust. Our limestone roads work into an impalpable powder of far less specific gravity than the sand which is the result of flint-mended roads; and in consequence, after a drought, the highways round Bristol, Cheltenham, Bath, Wells, are traceable for many a mile in our far-reaching prospects by the steam-like volumes of scudding white dust.

But no one knows what dust really is, who has not been among the mountains of the South. In 1868 I crossed Mont Cenis in the diligence with a friend, a few days before the opening of the wonderful summit railway. From Lans-le-bourg to St. Michel we were in a continued impenetrable mist of limestone dust. Once we got fairly off the road, the driver not being able to see ten yards before him: and we were all encrusted, and nearly choked, with the plague.

Of some such sort is the dust on the Riviera, entering and filling every kind of shoe, absolutely burying the bare foot, which is the only kind of chaussure at all capable of standing it. But even thus the inconvenience is not abated; for, as the dust covers everything alike, the unshod sole may light unawares on newly laid sharp stones, to the serious detriment of the walker.

And here we have the dust in perfection, on emerging from the close shady Via Cavour at Loano, and attacking the long level chord of the bay towards Finale. In the middle of this bay the mountains again retire back many miles, and climbing up a distant height is seen the road from Savona to Turin, which joins that from Oneglia, described in a former chapter.

Near Pietra, the hills again touch the road and the sea, and form at last the towered headland of Finale. In Pietra itself, we greet, after many a mile without the sight, two beautiful palms, rising from a group of orange-trees. It would seem as if the whole coast had but to be brought into careful cultivation, to yield almost everywhere the present products of Cannes and Mentone.

On approaching the tunnel, I observe some magnificent white liliaceous flowers rising from the deep sand by the road. I try, with the ferule of my sketching-stool, to get down to the bulb, but in vain. At eight or nine inches down, the stalk, in two instances, enters the rock, and is lost to human sight. I am obliged to content myself with the large granular black seed, which I find on some of the plants, perfectly ripe. This, I suppose, is what the Laureate described when he wrote of this same journey—

> "Here and there on sandy beaches
> A milky-belled amaryllis blew."



HEADLAND OF FINALE.

Immediately after the tunnel, Finale Marina is approached. But an emerald-green cove, most tempting to a sunbaked and dust-begrimed traveller, opens below the road on the right; and for once there is an accessible path, by which one can climb down. Small need to add, that I rush into the embraces of the Mediterranean, and spend an hour in Elysium.

When I regain the road, the sunset view of Finale is as tempting as was the emerald cove before. So that another hour is given to that, before the evening quarters are reached.

At the western entrance of Finale, a grand mountain valley opens out on the left, partially blocked by a huge hill, crowned with a fort and a church.

At the Albergo della China, at Finale, are really comfortable quarters,

—bed armed with mosquito-curtains—no small matter to secure. The town has much decayed splendour of a certain kind. Leading from the sea into the Piazza Grande, is a pretentious gateway of brick and stone, flanked by a close arcade. On it is a half-effaced inscription :—

. . . . . BOLIDES NITREO CVM PVLVERE FVLMEN
ANTIQUÆ MOLI VIX NOCVISSE STVPES
SAL NOMEN FRANCISCE TVVM TIMVISSE PVTAREM
CÆPIT QVÆ VIDEO PŒNITVISSE MARE.

From which I gather that the old mole of Finale resisted some tremendous storm, and thereby afforded an opportunity for a not very pious bit of flattery to some royal or ducal Francis, of whose name the sea is supposed to have been afraid. At any rate, mole and all have vanished now—so that I suppose the sea has ceased to be afraid of Francis, whoever he was.

In the row of houses facing the sea, is one with a marble doorway and staircase, now a stable, thus inscribed :—

Philippus V. Hisp. Rex has ædes angustas augustas fecit hospitio regali et ne tanti honoris pereat memoria Cap[us.] D. Thomas Buraccius mon[tum] posuit Anno MDCCII.

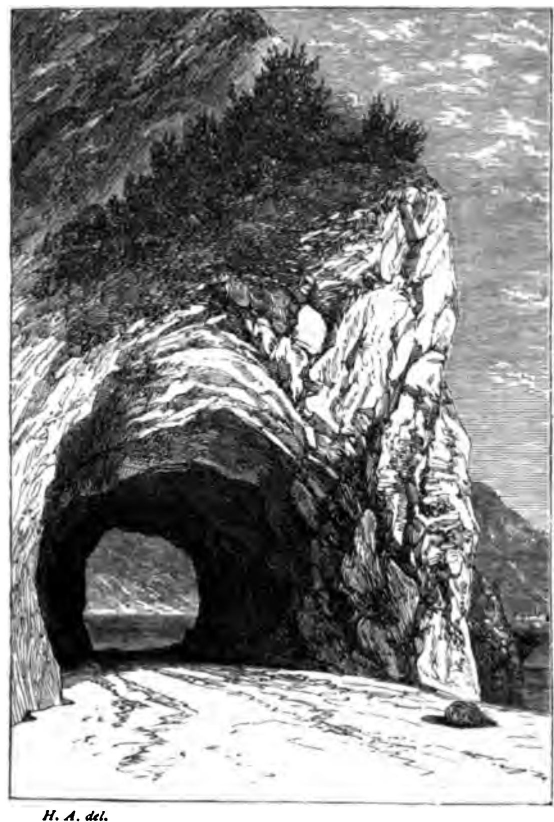
That is—

Philip V., King of Spain, rendered this insignificant house magnificent by his royal lodgement; and that the memory of so great honour may not perish, Captain D. Thomas Buracci has placed this monument, A.D. 1702.



AT ENTRANCE TO FINALE.





THE NOLI TUNNEL.

CHAPTER XXX.

Finale to Savona.

THE heat seems gathering day by day. Though it is close upon September, even at seven o'clock this morning all is in a dazzling glare. I stop on the rise of the hill out of the town, and take advantage of the shade of a friendly rock, to put in a coloured view of Finale and the coast. How lovely the tints of rose, and creamy purple, which lie veiled by mist, on the grand bank of hills opposite! And the town, with its forts and towers, and faded splendour, looks bright as some enthusiast's vision of a sunny home. The sea has its morning mantle of light sky-blue, seamed with bars of white. It seems to take the prime of the sunshine hours to endow it with depth of colour. There is absolutely no emerald green, which in the afternoon will be the clasping

girdle of the coast. The distance softly fades away into an indescribably mysterious pale red, which almost mingles with the warm blush of the sky. Under its peaked hill Loano sleeps, basking on the sea-line.

Thus pass two morning hours: till the gracious shade begins to desert us, and the sun to look fiercely in on our finishing touches. Then once more to the glare and the dust.

The road advances,—leaving to the right Varigotta, which lies on a projecting angle of coast,—and is cut through a neck of land, above which towers a considerable ruin. On our emerging from this cutting, the grand piece of rock scenery opens, which includes the Noli tunnel.

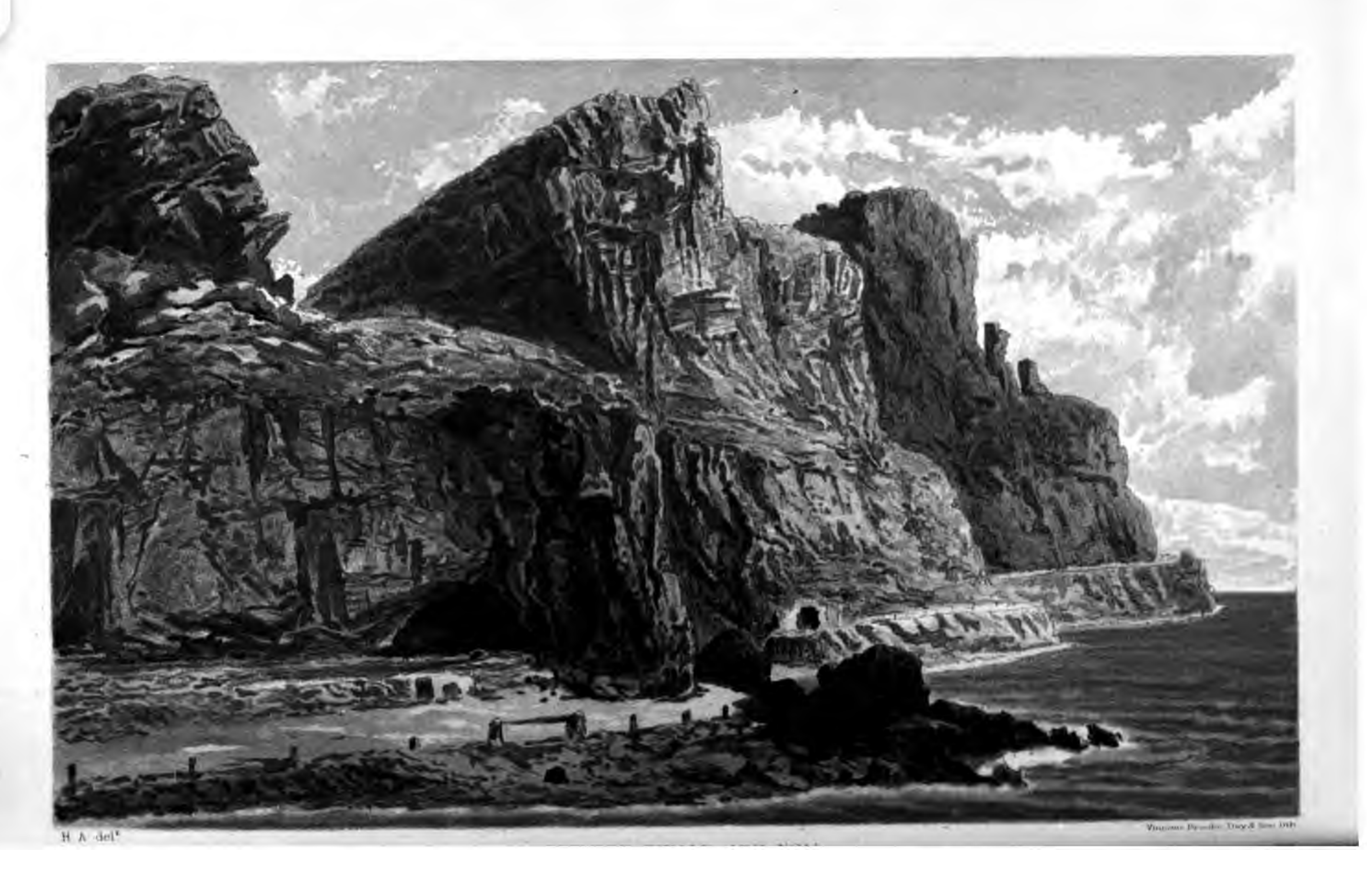
It is short measure as yet for another stoppage, and we have a long day before us; for there is not an albergo, even of the humblest sort, between this and Savona, at least fifteen miles off. But those three vast rock forms, and masses of colour, are sirens not to be withstood. And so again the shadow of a great rock is chosen, and we are sitting working away.

Another two hours finds us at the Noli tunnel, where, by the way, the glare of sun, and depth of dust, are both at the maximum. The latter was just four inches deep by measurement; and the intensity of the former may be imagined from the fact, that on plunging into the grateful shade of the tunnel, the eye refused to see any colour but brilliant scarlet.

Once past the tunnel, Noli, with its domed church, and huge red Albenga-like towers, lies stretched beneath.

It is two hours past noon, and both hunger and heat suggest a look-out for an osteria, where may be got refreshment and a siesta. Nor is the search long. That pergola, roofed with dry chestnut leaves, among which a vigorous gourd is pushing its great foliage and yellow fruit, bids fair to supply the need.

Nor is the promise vain. First, a tawny black-eyed damsel; then a stout kindly hostess; then, at the demand for food, the still more ample form of mine host emerges from the cucina, which looms in apparent darkness behind. And so is produced cold whiting, and refreshing native wine, and the delicious country bread, with its hard smooth crust and purest white beneath—and the never-failing Parmesan, accompanying a no less picturesque than welcome group of pears, and figs, and grapes.


H. A. delt

Nor is the least luxury the family well, opening from a cupboard-door behind where I sit, and furnishing a caraffe of acqua fresca, coated with its soft veil of condensing mist.

Pretty well this for a place whose walls last saw whitewash in honour of Andrea Doria, if so lately, and whose floor, by accretions on the original brick, might now pass for the natural soil, on which sundry hens dispute with one another the perquisite of the crumbs from the tables.

So pass two more hours, wiled away by watching the cooking of the best dinner the place could afford, and its transmission by the hands of the figlia to two priests whom I had seen shown up stairs,—by striving in vain to comprehend a game at cards between a doganale and a bronze-chested workman,—by listening to an argument on the merits of the French Emperor's amnesty,—and by all the sleep the flies would allow. And then the trifling payment, and the hearty "*a rivederla,*" and we are once more among the dust and the glare.



Between Noli and Spoturno, there is a splendid pine wood above the road, backed by picturesque mountains. This is a rare feature in Riviera scenery, being found, as far as I can remember, only at Cannes and Mentone besides.

The road is fine, and is carried by terraces under the rocks, but is not worth extraordinary notice. I went, by way of a short cut, through one of the long unfinished tunnels of the future railway, having inquired previously of the workmen the practicability of so doing. But I would not advise future pedestrians to imitate my example. Before reaching the middle, I was wrapped in total darkness, and splashing ankle deep in water and mud; the result being, of course, that I brought out of

the tunnel very much more than I had carried in. After this, the repetition of yesterday's bathe was not to be resisted.

The distant view of Spoturno is as deceptive as that of most of the Riviera towns; and the stately-looking Savona, which, seen far off, might be imagined Genoa itself, is, at some distance before approaching it, resolved into an ill-assorted assemblage of flat square barracks and filthy cottages.

Long before reaching its outskirts, the grand stretch of the bright buildings of the Queen of the Riviera becomes more and more plain, and the nearer Savona looks like a projecting faubourg of the noble city which is now opening to view.

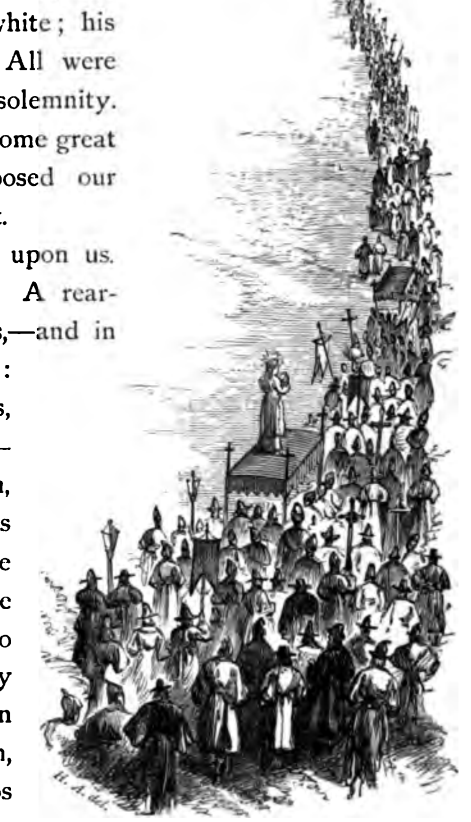
And so we plod wearily through the long tantalizing approaches, which seem as if they would never allow us to enter the town,—pass a whole quarter of new squares and boulevards (to what end building, must be uncertain, for the whole city is triste and scantly inhabited), and rejoice at seeing at length the Chiabrera theatre, and close beside it the Albergo della Suizzera.

In connection with Savona, I may mention a visit which I made in March 1869, to the Madonna della Misericordia, a celebrated pilgrimage church about four miles off among the hills to the north.

The weather was showery, so I thought I would get the best of the morning, and left the hotel in a light carriage, intending only to see the church and its situation, of which I had heard much in England.



We soon got among the foldings of the hills, and soon also became aware that we were by no means the only passengers along the road. As we advanced, the plot thickened. Carriages, omnibuses, and shandry-dans of all degrees of incrustation with dust, pedestrians in curious coloured calico and chintz envelopes with hoods, and cords round the waist, multiplied the further we got on. Of the three figures in our foreground, the stout gentleman on the left was all in red; the middle man in somewhat soiled white; his right-hand neighbour in brown. All were marching along with the greatest solemnity. It was evident I had come in for some great day. My driver evidently supposed our vehicle went on business like the rest.



At last the whole scene burst upon us. And a most striking one it was. A rear-guard of twelve well-filled carriages,—and in front of it all manner of grand things: gilt lanterns, banners of all kinds, large crosses glittering with silver,—and a great ugly golden Virgin, carried on a kind of bier, on men's shoulders. This was something like the appearance of the remarkable procession. My driver could give no reasonable account of it all; only that it was a grand Festa. But on my subsequent visit in the autumn, I saw something which might perhaps furnish an assignable cause. On a church door at Distinalpi, near Finale Marina, was this notice printed:—

COMMISSIONE AMMINISTRATIVA
DELLI OSPIZI
DELLA CITTA DI SAVONA.
AVVISO SACRO.

Si previene il Pubblico che nei giorni 7 ed 8 dell' entrante mese di Settembre avra

luogo al SANTUARIO, secondo il consueto, il Bacio dei Piedi della Sacra Statua de NOSTRA SIGNORA DI MISERICORDIA.

Savona li 20 Agosto, 1869.

Per detta Commissione,

(LS) Il Segretario,

(*An illegible flourish.*)

That is:—

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION
OF THE HOSPITALS
OF THE CITY OF SAVONA.
SACRED NOTICE.

The Public are informed that on the 7th and 8th days of the coming month of September, there will take place at the SANCTUARY, according to custom, the Kissing of the Feet of the Holy Image of OUR LADY OF MERCY.

Savona, August 20, 1869.

By the aforesaid Commission,

(LS) The Secretary,

(*An illegible flourish.*)

The crowd on the Piazza, before the church, was immense; and all sight of the building itself, except as a peep over the shoulders crushed densely together at the entrance, was, of course, impossible. Not the least curious thing on the Piazza, were the many stalls filled with strings or rosaries of nuts, the appropriated memorial, worn over the shoulders as a scarf, of a visit to La Madonna della Misericordia. I of course duly provided myself with the appointed souvenir of my unexpected pilgrimage.

The far-famed church is not worthy of a visit, nor is its situation anything worth special notice.



SPOTURNO.



THE FIUME DI LATTE.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Savona to Genoa.

THE night has been one of turbulence, and the morning sky exhibits that confusion which commonly follows. The splash of rain, with distant growls of thunder, is a curious accompaniment to this burning sun, which streams in at the open windows.

Just the day when one would not wish to walk. For there can be but one result of that deep dust of yesterday, and that is, equally deep mud; add to which the thunder-rain may at any moment come down, as it did more than once in the night, and then there would be small chance of comfort. And as for any probability of painting, the clouds have all the water-colour to themselves. The railway is, of course, out of the question; though for absolute beauty the line is quite equal to the road, and indeed, by being carried nearer the sea, enjoys some fine coast views of which the other route is deprived.

So I charter a small carriage, with possible defence from the wet.

The road at first is carried inland, among rich hill-locked valleys, filled with gardens laden with fruit. Pergolas stretch across their avenues, their vine-leaves glittering with the fresh drops in the sun; and when one

gets a look beneath them, the luscious-looking ripe grapes hang in grand masses overhead. The fig-trees are clothed with their black or green figs; the peach-trees with their bright yellow burdens. Tomatos (*pomi d'oro*) trained to their cross canes, glow in the distance with their rosy clusters. On rounding a corner of hill beyond Albi-sola, a magnificent view opens. Look back, and you see Savona, with its port and long range of buildings, and beyond it all the coast as far as Finale. Beneath you, in the curve of the bay, is Albi-sola, and right of it a grand opening up into the mountains, dotted with villas and palaces. But that long range of red building, arcaded and most Italian, is not, my driver tells me, a palace, but a foundry, belonging to a Genoese Marchese.

We now descend to the sea among the great blocks of conglomerate which here jut out among the waves. This kind of coast continues past Celle, with grand back views of Savona and the westward coast, till we round a corner, and the beautiful bay of Varazze opens. Round the curve stretches the town, having the usual appearance of stately grandeur. All the population from this point, almost to Genoa, seem to find their employment in shipbuilding; and the forms of great hulks, in differing stages of incompletion, lie by dozens and scores along every beach. Immediately behind are olive-crowned hills, and behind these the stately mountains. The slope of the near hills is diversified by villas and gardens, which thicken as we advance onwards. The burning red of the painted terraces is varied with the light gleaming pink of the flowering oleanders, abounding in the gardens.

Perhaps Varazze is the most characteristic town of this part of the Riviera. Its streets, hardly wide enough for your carriage, are full of Ligurian life. Its shore resounds with the hammers of the shipwrights.

This day of dripping warmth has a strange effect on the working population, and on the boy element in these towns. A wet skin doubtless is less inconvenient than a wet garment, so the shirt is pretty generally dispensed with, and the study of muscular forms might be advantageously pursued among the shipwrights. The boys have carried the same economical process further; many of them have but a few inches covering, and not a few have dispensed even with that. These phenomena give an impression of an unwontedness and distance from home habits, which doubtless is soon lost on travellers further south, but which now comes upon me for the first time.

On leaving Varazze we wind, in pouring rain, among hills dappled

with rock, down which pours, in a hundred tiny cataracts, the yellow surface water. We descend on Cogoleto, among grand masses of serpentine contrasting beautifully with the fresh green growths upon them. I may observe on this serpentine, that as far as I have examined, it differs from the Cornish in the absence of red in the stone. Black (*i. e.*, dark purple) and green seem to be its only colours. The white intervening steatite, or soap-stone, is present in great quantities. The shapes of the rocks are quite Cornish, and some of the bits of coast might be transplanted, almost without the difference being observed, to Kynance or the Lizard.

Cogoleto, the reputed birthplace of Columbus, possesses no other than this questionable interest. Before entering it we cross a torrent foaming and tumbling with its turbid waters, and staining the sea for many a mile out.



H. A. del.
NEAR COGOLETO.

As we leave Cogoleto the effect is grand on the mountains. Great masses of heavy rain-cloud are barred with white mist, and show through bright gleams of yellow sunshine.

Very soon a torrent is passed, the Fiume di Larte (or qu. Latte? I asked my driver, but he stuck to La*r*te), forming the outlet to a splendid valley (see head of this chapter). The road rises along the left bank of the torrent through fine woods, crossing a low col or neck of hill, and descends by a very lovely view of the coast into Orenzana. Looking forward, you see the hills stretching for many a mile, dotted with white towns and towers, and at the end the tall Mole and long glittering reach of Genoa. And then we arrive at Voltri, along a beautiful bit of coast, the rocks to the left of the road fringed with ilex and with aloes.

From Voltri to Genoa, about ten miles, is a succession of shipbuilding beaches seaward, and of hills clothed with villas and gardens landward. Behind the latter look over the spurs of the mountains, and sometimes a valley runs up, lost in the folds of the hills. Such a valley is that of the Varrenna torrent, behind the pleasant suburban resort of Pegli. I had a pleasant early morning expedition, with some friends, a few miles up this

valley last spring in search of ferns. We were rewarded, in spite of provoking rains, by finding abundance of the *Nothoclæna marantæ* (?), a curious silver-backed fern, and some very fine masses of the beautiful *Pteris cretica.* There is an asbestos rock some way further up the gorge, but we could not reach it on account of the rain.

One can hardly pass the populous manufacturing and shipbuilding town of Sestri, without another fling at the foolish arrangement of the Ferrovia. The road from Sestri to Genoa is full of little omnibuses running to the city and back for a few centimes, and with only the trouble of getting in and out. Many hundreds of persons are conveyed daily by these private enterprises, rather than incur the expense and trouble of the train. The former might not perhaps be so much of an object, but the latter is more than human nature can bear. You are exhorted to be at the station full half an hour before the train starts. You are locked into a miserable sala d'aspetto, losing your time and liberty ; the train is as often as not, even though it has but twenty miles to run altogether, half an hour or more late ; when in it you are kept and shunted about, so that the result is, the public will not stand it, and the Sestri omnibuses have it their own way.

But by this time the tall lighthouse towers over our way, we have passed the suburbs, and we are fast entering the stately city itself.

The Riviera, and not Genoa, was the subject of our book. We have now fulfilled our task, as far as the route is concerned.



NEAR VOLTRI.



BOCCA WOOD, CANNES.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Trees.

A NOTICE of the beautiful Riviera di Ponente would be quite imperfect without some attempt at description of one of its most charming features. I mean the forest growths and cultivated trees which greet the traveller as he passes along its shores.

Before taking the leading species in detail, it may be well to say something of the general effect of foliage in the south. There is nothing on the coast which we have been describing, at all like our English tree-masses. You must go as far as Tuscany, before you see any resemblance to our forest glens. The general character of the Riviera is aridity. The vegetation is in considerable part evergreen, and aromatic. The pine, either scraggy and skeleton-like, or massive and umbrella-like, the dark spiky cypress, the knotty cork-tree, the glaucous, terraced olive, the thick varnished-leaved carouba, these and the like rise from the undergrowth, which latter again is mainly made up of myrtle, lentisk, and dwarf ilex, twined about and tangled together by the wild asparagus and the thorny sarsaparilla.

Of course the great exceptions to this are found in the garden and field growths, the mulberry, the fig, the peach, the vine. In winter, which I still think the best time for the beauty of the Riviera, all these are but bare branches. In summer they are luxuriant enough ; but, to say truth, grievously disguised by the inevitable coating of dust.

But the peculiar character of the Riviera vegetation is mainly occasioned by the presence of the orange, and in some few places the far tenderer lemon-trees. In consequence, the sheltered nooks of coast,—and in some favoured spots, such as Monaco and Mentone, the whole sea-margins,—are clothed in a tender gamboge green, which to a northern eye is passing strange. And even where this is not so, all the belt of green surrounding the towns and villages is dappled with glittering patches of this exquisite verdure.

One beautiful tree, the palm, is too exceptional everywhere else, and too plentiful at Bordighera, not to be treated of in connexion with that place (see Chap. XXII.).

Another growth, now characteristic, though of course not indigenous, is the aloe. But we seldom see, where this plant is wild, the gigantic specimens which culture produces. The suckers, which we in England are careful to remove, rob the mother plant of her pre-eminence, and a dense mass of thorny mediocrity is the result. It is only when it runs up into the majestic flower-stalk, that we see the real beauty of the aloe in its wild state. The great candelabra of the dead flower-stems remain for years towering over the clumps of glaucous spiked leaves, and are most picturesque forms in the rocky foreground. But as to the aloe itself, I have seen far finer specimens in the Scilly Islands than in Italy.

The prickly pear is found in most gardens, and where gardens have been; and it sometimes grows to an enormous size. I remember being taken to see one at the back of Nice, which towered over a cottage, and its great unshapely mass of a trunk looked like some hideous saurian sprawling over the walls.

Of the trees proper I have selected three for special notice, the pine, the olive, and the carouba.

By the PINE I do not mean the scrubby species which is sprinkled over the rocky heights from Cannes to Genoa, of which I have already spoken; but the large umbrella pine, surely the grandest and most striking of European trees. Whether we consider the enormous size which the patriarchs of the race attain,—or the graceful balance shown by the lean of the vast trunk being compensated by the opposite cast over of the great field of green which constitutes the head,—or the infinite play of colour among the rich red flakes of the sunny bark, and the deep indigo of the same in shadow,—or the soft multitudinous whisper of the wind through

the myriad needles of leafage,—there is no tree which can surpass the pine in varied interest for eye and ear.

Very fine specimens of the large pine are found in several places on the Riviera. Our first illustration is from a photograph of part of the well-known Bocca wood, west of Cannes. This wood lines the shore for about two miles, and the large trees already given in our vignette of the hill at St. Cassien (p. 12) are the concluding individuals of the series.

At Nice, we have the well-known Bellet pine, conspicuous on the height above that wine-producing village, and distinguishable many a mile off on land and at sea. Near Monaco, "Les pins du prince," have furnished many an artist with an effective subject, standing as they do looking from their commanding cliff over the lovely bay.

As we advance, we find few majestic woods, but here and there an insulated specimen. A grand pine-forest has been already noticed between Noli and Spoturno; it forms the subject of our vignette on p. 109. We cannot refrain from giving a drawing of the finest tree of this kind which



we know. It is not strictly on the Riviera, though on a point of land visible from much of the western portion of our route. Its site is about two miles west from St. Tropez.

The OLIVE first meets the southern traveller's eye about Chateau Neuf, a few miles below Montelimar. Its appearance is anything but picturesque: and tourists who have seen it only in this phase, or with whom first impressions are never corrected, go on abusing it all their lives as a disappointing, stiff, overpruned tree. But they might as well judge of the pine by a formal nursery-ground seedling. There are few trees

capable of more graceful and picturesque effect than the olive; few, to the memory of which any one clings with more fondness, who has been initiated in the silva of the south.

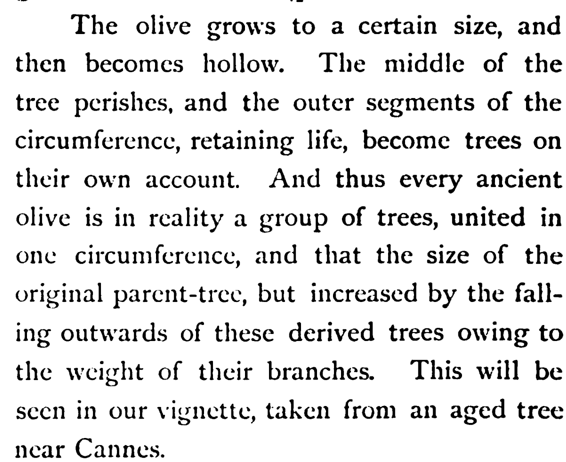
And yet I speak of it, as regards association, at a disadvantage. I have never meditated in Gethsemane, nor climbed the steep of the Mount of the Ascension. I write of the tree merely as a tree; as nature's pabulum for an eye that loves the beautiful.

As the train clatters along southward towards Orange and Avignon, olives at first are very few and far between. For many many miles, those in sight may almost be counted by dozens. There is a fair sprinkling on the arid hill crowned by the beautiful ruined chateau of Mondragon; and from that point they begin, as gray round-headed shrubs, to be conspicuous among the subtropical vegetation now thickening around. They are for a time hardly distinguishable from the stunted ilexes and cork-trees which also now begin to be plentiful.

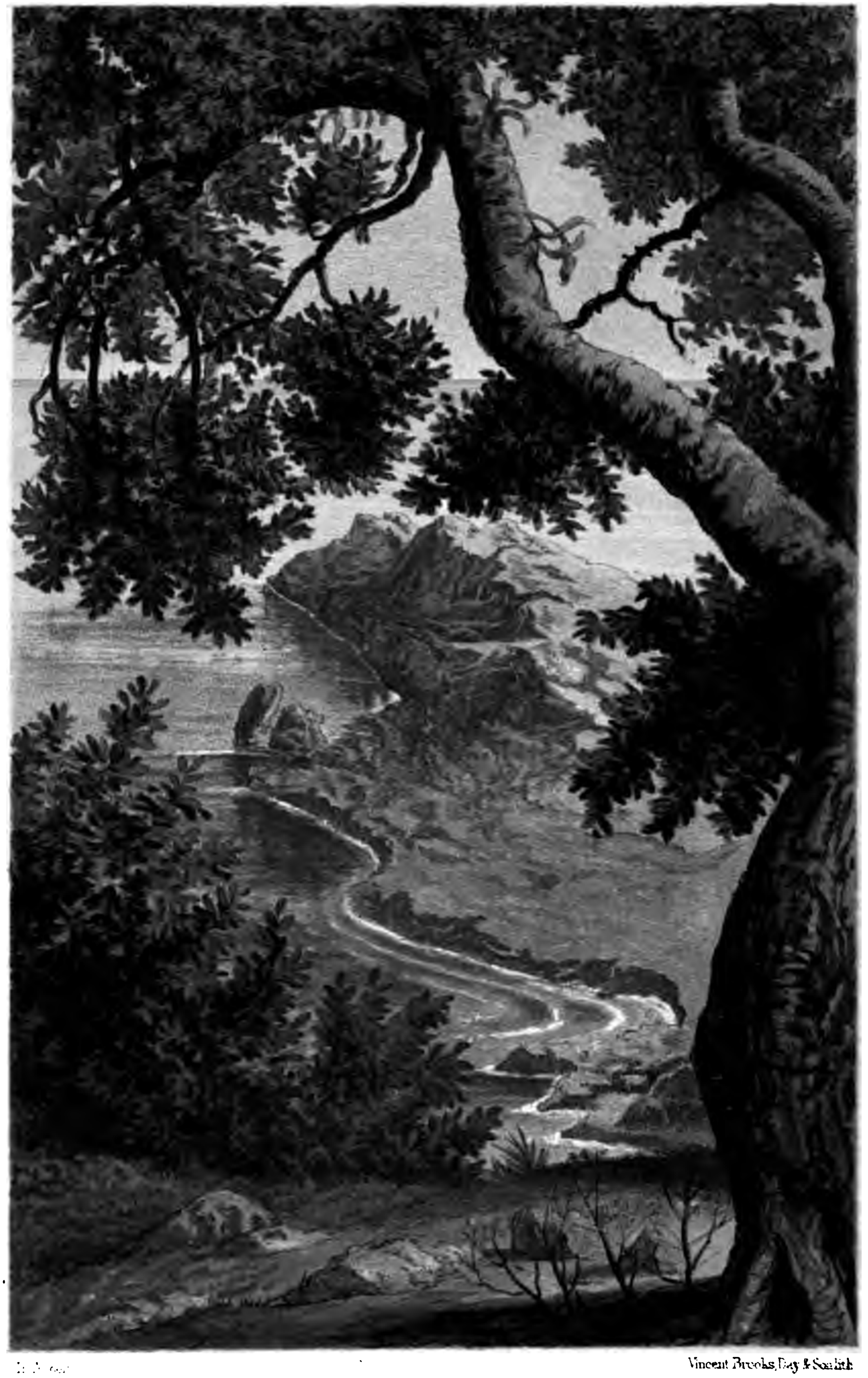
Along the whole of the strange route from Marseilles to Toulon and Cannes, the olive does itself scanty justice, or rather perhaps has scanty justice done it, as far as its appearance is concerned. It is cut out in the middle in the form of a cup, and pruned flat on the top, so that it is even more formal than further north.

At Cannes first, you begin to see the exquisite pendent grace of its untrimmed branches: and thenceforward the trees improve with every onward mile. About Mentone the olive reaches its best. In order for a stay-at-home reader to appreciate what that is, the method of the tree's growth must first be explained to him.





The olive grows to a certain size, and then becomes hollow. The middle of the tree perishes, and the outer segments of the circumference, retaining life, become trees on their own account. And thus every ancient olive is in reality a group of trees, united in one circumference, and that the size of the original parent-tree, but increased by the falling outwards of these derived trees owing to the weight of their branches. This will be seen in our vignette, taken from an aged tree near Cannes.



Vincent Brooks, Day & Son lith.

THE CAROUBA

p. 121.

The stem of the olive becomes more gnarled than that of any tree except the beech, which

"wreathes its old fantastic roots so high."

On the stone terraces on which it is ordinarily grown along the Riviera, it is not uncommon to see large pieces of rock enclosed in the huge boles of trunk and root. These terraces may be seen in our first view of Mentone, Chapter XVII., p. 51.

The fruit of the olive has been unfortunately of late years a rare sight along the Riviera. I walked in 1867 from Campo Rosso to Dolce Acqua with a farmer, who told me that it was eight years since he had seen fruit on his olives; that when the barren seasons reached ten, he should grub up his olives and plant wheat. But the next year, on the way from Oneglia to Pieve, we found the fruit abundant, so that I hope the worst point is now turned, and that my friend's olives will yet stand their ground.

"The CAROUBA, or locust-tree, is really one of the glories of this and other barren but warm regions in the south of Europe. It is a beautiful evergreen tree, vigorous, fresh, and graceful, with an abundant light-green foliage. It grows in the most stony, arid, and burnt-up places, on rocks and on mountain-sides, where there is scarcely a particle of soil, and where its very existence is a marvel, a problem, a source of positive surprise and exultation to the beholder. Indeed, the carouba may be considered an emblem of evergreen vegetation, and a perfect botanical demonstration. Such a tree cannot live from its roots, for they often only bind it to the rock on which it grows by creeping into crevices, and laying hold of every inequality of ground. It must live in a great measure by its leaves, as most evergreens do to a very considerable extent. The carouba-tree bears pods, very useful for the nourishment of cattle. Each tree is said to produce, one year with another, twenty francs' worth of fruit. These beans have of late been introduced into England as food for cattle."—Dr. Bennet, *Winter in the south of Europe*, p. 25.

To this description of Dr. Bennet's I may add a few observations. The carouba may be taken as a fair thermometer along the shores of the Riviera. It seldom appears—it certainly never abounds—except in the very choicest spots for heat and shelter. A few—a very few—are found at Cannes, and on the little bay of Golfe-Jouan. They first begin to

attract the traveller's attention eastward of Nice, along the rocky and indented shores of Villafranca, Beaulieu, Eza, and on the promontory of St. Jean. As Monaco is approached, they begin to abound, and to reach a large size. The whole rocky coast under the Testa del Can is full of them, and so is the road from Monaco to Mentone, and the crag-built village of Roccabruna. After Mentone, we have them again, but not so plentiful, on the promontory of La Murtola. Beyond that, I do not remember any quantity, either at Bordighera, San Remo, or Oneglia. But they appear again in numbers about Alassio.

On the eastern Riviera I do not think they abound, except perhaps at that choicest haunt of beauty, Spezia. When we turn the arc of the bay at Genoa, we bid farewell to the higher types of tropical vegetation. The western sun, with his splendid effusion of afternoon and evening light, cannot compete in power with the same orb in the fresh vigour of the morning. The "giant rejoicing to run his course," brings out responsive vegetation from the earth, which the beauty of his decline cannot tempt forth. So that the lemon, the carouba, the palm—even the hardier orange—are less luxuriant, or are even altogether wanting, on the western shore of north Italy.

The pods of the carouba have a habit, as far as I know, peculiar to themselves among the products of leguminous plants. They grow not only among the dense masses of foliage dependent at the extremities of branches, but also direct from the main stems, and even from the great trunk of the tree itself, as may be seen in our drawing.

The sketch was taken at a spot about two miles west of Monaco. The point seen under the hill is marked on the French map as Cap d'Ail.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A Dial-Log.

AMONG other phenomena incidental to a coast facing South, is the occurrence of numerous sun-dials on walls and house fronts. These for the most part are of no great antiquity. I do not remember to have seen any dating further back than 1790. The designs, as well as the mottoes, are very various. Sometimes, as on a dial opposite the little "Marina" at Bordighera, we have an elaborate arrangement of intersecting lines, terminating with the symbolic marks of the zodiac, and drawn on the stucco in gay colours, blue and red. Usually, however, the character is plainer; the lines of the hours drawn within a square or a round border, or pursued to the extremity of the frontage. But hardly any dial is without its motto; and some of these mottoes are not without interest. The common one:—

PEREVNT ET IMPVTANTVR,

is sometimes found; but usually the sense is more elaborate.

I observed this on a dial in the Rue de France, at Nice:—

Io vado e vengo ogni giorno,
Ma tu andrai senza ritorno.

"I come and go, and go and come, each day,
But thou without return shalt pass away."

On the great Bordighera dial above mentioned, is read:—

Senza parlar io son inteso
Senza rumor hore (qu. lore?) paleso.

"I speak not, yet all understand me well;
I make no sound, and yet the hours I tell."

On a house a little E. of this, we have the simple words—

Memento hore novissime.
"Remember thy last hour."

Between Spoturno and Vado, these, simpler still,—

Ultima necat.
"The last is fatal."

Between Bordighera and the Nervia, I saw,—

Afflictis lentae, celeres gaudentibus horae.

" To them that mourn, the hours are slow,
But with the joyful swiftly go."

And further W., between Nervia and Convento,—

Una di queste t' aprira le porte
Di vita lieta o di spietata morte.

" One of these hours shall open thee the gate
Of blissful life, or of relentless fate."

At Cogoleto, the reputed birth-place of Columbus, we have an ambitious Latin couplet :—

O tu qui binam uno gnomone conspicis horam,
Heu miser ignoras qua moriturus eris.

" Thou who the double hours dost read,
By one shade passing by,
Poor fool ! no power of thine can tell
On which one thou must die."

At Porto Maurizio, I noticed a very brief French inscription,—

" C'est l'heure de bien faire."

A friend has augmented my collection by the following :—

At Vignale :—

Portatrice a voi di bene,
L'ore siam de' di sereni,
Si annotta, o tuona, o piove,
Noi fuggiam in grembo a Giove.

" Bearers of wealth to you, the sons of men,
Are we, the sunlit hours of days serene ;
If night, or rain, or thunder, blur the sky,
Into our Father's bosom back we fly.

Not known where :—

Son figlia del Sole,
Eppure son ombre.
" I the Sun my father call,
Yet am shadow after all."

My friend also observed on a dial, in the Riviera country,—

Tego tegendo.
"I cover by covering,"

but suggested that two letters must have been obliterated, and that it should be—

Detego tegendo.
"I reveal by covering,"

viz., the hours.

It struck me as curious, this outburst of sentimental inscriptions, at the end of the last century, when the continent was possessed by far other thoughts. The passion does not seem altogether to have passed away. I observed, between Mentone and Bordighera, a brand-new villa conspicuously inscribed—

Hic licet indulgere genio.

On inquiry, I found that it belonged to an eccentric lady.

While on inscriptions, it may not be amiss to notice, that the old local roadside indications of towns and villages, are for the most part kept up in their original terms, notwithstanding the annexation of Nice to France. Here is the common form:—

COMUNE DI RIVA
CERCONDARIO DI SAN REMO
PROVINCIA DI PORTO MAURIZIO
STRADA NAZIONALE DA GENOVA A NIZZA.

This one is glad to see. In one only instance did I notice—

STRADA NAZIONALE DA GENOVA ALLE FRONTIERE FRANCESE.

I may add that the inscriptions in the original terms were, in many cases, not merely allowed to remain, but recently and elaborately renewed. Along the Riviera, faith in the recovery of Nice to Italy seems to be very general.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Hotels.

THE Hotels along this Riviera road have, during the seven years of my acquaintance with it, certainly not improved. The rage for over-bnilding has spoilt the best of them. Instead of being comfortable homes, where one was made acquaintance with, and attended to, most of them have developed into enormous *anthropothekes* (manholders, as 'Charivari' travestied the king of Bavaria's glyptothekes and pinakothekes at Munich), where you are simply one of the mass, and can rarely get a civil word.

In no case has this been more disagreeably exemplified, than in that of the Hôtel Paradis at Nice. It used to be a snug little house, on the sea, the resort of a few distinguished foreigners, and of such English as liked a thoroughly foreign hotel. Now, it has become the "Grand Hôtel Paradis," in the flat uninteresting quarter of Longchamps—an enormous pile of building, scanty in attendance and in furniture. I was obliged to make an expedition for a writing-table for my large empty room; and on returning in the evening, before the table-d'hôte, it took me just three-quarters of an hour to get my bell answered for hot-water. My experience of this "Paradise Lost" diverted my steps on the way back, in 1869, to a former haunt, the Hôtel des Princes, which I knew, from its being built under the Citadel rock, has no room to expand. There I found all as comfortable as si: years ago. The only drawback is that, being in the eye of the sun, wit the high rock radiating behind, you are liable to be roasted out by abc the first of April. But mine host then transports his guests bodily t suburban villa, of which I have heard charming accounts.

The 'Victoria' at Mentone, as each year it has become bigger, has become less comfortable. Some of the arrangements at this hote deserving of all reprobation. The wines, for example, are in most two francs a bottle, in some as much as four francs, more in price t Nice or in Paris; and, what is even worse, are not, after all, that whi

pass for. In 1869, complaints of insolence, and of bad food, were general: and the utter neglect as to delivery of letters was most annoying. On the day of my leaving I had been waiting some hours, inquiring for a packet of proof-sheets, which I was sure must be in the hotel. I was sent by the porter to my *sommelier d'etage*, at the very top of the house: by him was directed to enquire below: was told by one waiter that *all* the letters were put up in a glass frame at the entrance,—by another, that only those of persons *staying* in the house were thus exposed; and finally, after exhausting every source of information, and being treated to a good deal of insolence, made up my mind to leave without my proofs. On going into the office to pay my bill, I happened to see my much-sought packet lying among a heap of papers on the bureau of the *maîtré d'hôtel!* There it had been all the time, and might have remained till now, had not Messrs. Strahans' well-known buff wrapper caught my eye.

Treatment of this kind will infallibly drive our countrymen away from these huge barracks into quieter and more limited inns: which latter accommodation it will be well worth the while of speculators on the Riviera to provide.

I must make a favourable exception from this charge, of comfort varying inversely as size, in the case of the 'Beau Site' at Cannes, which still was, in 1869, the best hotel along the line, though it had doubled in extent since the last season. How much of this superiority was owing to its excellent secretary, is probably known by this time: as he told me he was about to leave in order to set up for himself. If this has been so, all success befall him; for a more civil fellow, or a better manager, I have not seen. It has been my lot twice to put up at the 'Londra' at San Remo. I have not been encouraged to venture for the luck which is said to accompany the third time of trying.

The quality of the ordinary inns along the road may be surmised from descriptions which have occurred in the body of this work. They may not all be suitable for invalids; certainly they are not for those travellers who expect to find English comforts everywhere. But for the able-bodied tourist or family, who find amusement, and a bracing influence, in the varieties of little adventure, almost any village on the Riviera will furnish a commodious resting-place. Almost everywhere will be found cleanliness, and wholesome food; and everywhere, without exception, courtesy and kindness.

And thus our Riviera notes have come to an end. We have not intended them as a traveller's guide, but rather as reminiscences of a route which is in remembrance endeared to many. We have in them touched hardly at all upon serious matters, but have confined ourselves in the main to natural descriptions, varied by the incidents of travel. We did not wish to spoil what was for ourselves pure recreation and restoration by intermixing it with thoughts and reflections which, as matter of fact, it did not suggest.

Our illustrations we offer as the simple contributions of an amateur with very scanty opportunities for practice. We are quite willing to risk the severe criticism of professional judges, if we may have succeeded in calling up to our readers the wonders of form and colour which abound on this beautiful coast.



FROM HÔTEL D'ANGLETERRE, BORDIGHERA.

